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Travellers and the Industrial Revolution: Observations of Cornwall

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TRAVELLERS AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Observations of Cornwall

By Cynthia Lane

A dissertation submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts (History) – Honours
Edith Cowan University
Faculty of Community Services, Education and Social Sciences

Date of Submission: 9 March 2002

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

Abstract

The following dissertation is a “contribution to contemporary debates about the industrial revolution and the perpetuation of ‘difference’.”¹ It covers the era of Cornish industrialisation and the attendant socio-economic and cultural changes from the emergence of copper mining in the 1690s to the eve of its crash in 1866, through the observations of a selection of contemporary travellers/writers. It explores the image of Cornwall through West Barbary versus Industrial Civilisation, and compares the county’s processes of industrialisation with the canonical industrial revolution of the midlands and the north of England.

Cornwall is examined as an example of the diversity within Britain in the era of industrialisation, and a Cornish industrial culture is found that developed quite differently and separately to the rest of Britain. Through the isolation of three themes; *space*, *livings* and *people*, the travellers’ comments have been analysed to reveal a permutation of the mythology of West Barbary and Cornish industrialisation with spatial myths, traditions and perceived space, and an inherent pride in character, identity, and culture.

¹ Philip Payton, examiner’s report.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;*
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or*
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.*

Date: 9 March 2002

Cynthia Lane.

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I would like to thank my supervisor Ed Jaggard for his belief in my ability to complete an honours dissertation, and his requirement for succinctness and high standards, which I attribute to the success of my completed work. I would like to also thank my daughter Solancé for her patience, and capacity to share her computer (and accompanying expertise) especially considering it was her TEE year. And no thanks to my little boy Aidan, born during the first honours year with the associated sleepless nights and hectic days resulting in the rolling onto a second year, however his adorability, charm and pure delight inspired me to steadfastly work to its completion.

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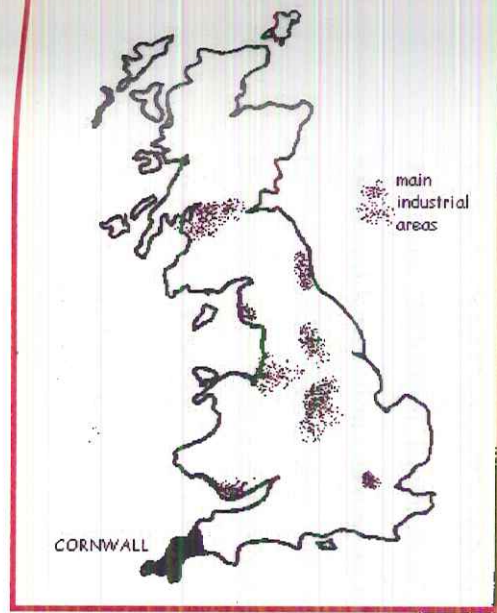
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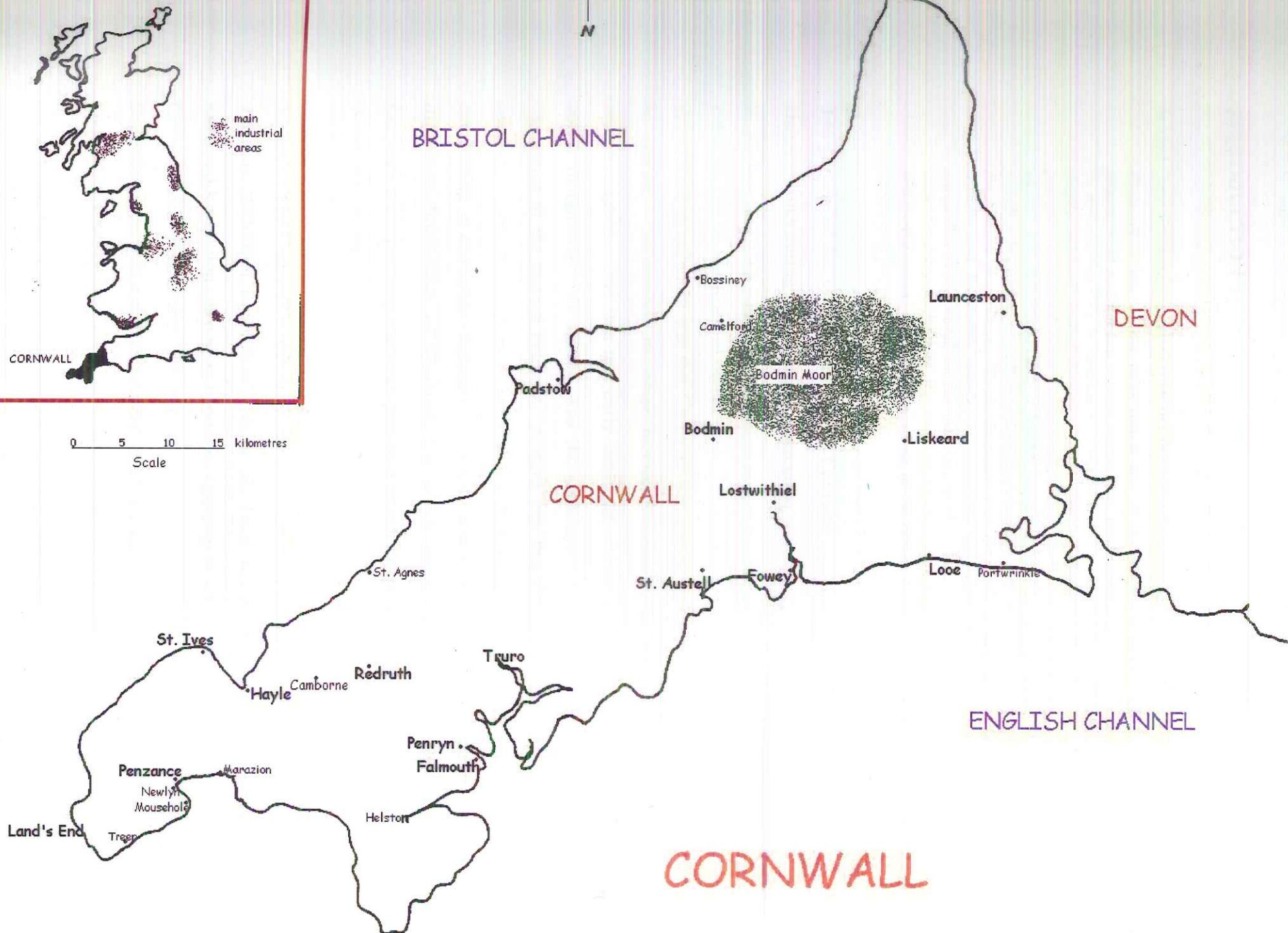
- a) spelling has been modernised,*
 - b) typography has been normalised replacing the f with s,*
 - c) punctuation has been left intact including the use of colons,*
 - d) place names have been updated in either spelling, or if the name has changed.*
-

SOUTHWEST TRAVELLERS' TIMELINE

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Celia Fiennes | 1698 |
| Daniel Defoe | 1724 |
| Dr Richard Pococke | 1750 |
| William Gilpin | 1778 |
| Rev. John Swete | 1780 |
| La Rochefoucauld brothers, (excluding Cornwall) | 1785 |
| James Boswell | 1792 |
| James Forbes | 1794 |
| Rev. Richard Warner | 1808 |
| Richard Ayton & William Daniell, (vol i, ii) | 1813 - 1814 |
| William Daniell, (vol viii) | 1823 |
| William Cobbett, (excluding Cornwall) | 1821 - 1832 |
| Cyrus Redding | 1842 |
| Wilkie Collins | 1850 |
| Walter White | 1854 |
| Thomas Mills | 1863 |



0 5 10 15 kilometres
Scale



INTRODUCTION

In 1842 Cyrus Redding summarised some of Cornwall's characteristics.

Cornwall is one of the most remarkable of the English counties, not only from its geographical position and mineral productions, but because it possesses features peculiarly its own, having little in common with the other territorial divisions of England. ... Shores deeply indented, lashed by ever restless seas, secluded coves with extensible sands, precipitous headland, beautiful and fertile valleys, sterile hills with granite peaks. Extended wastes, and districts boasting a fertility surpassed nowhere in the island, scenery of the grandest description, as well as of the softest character—these are all distinguishing traits of the Cornish promontory. To the foregoing may be added, a mild and genial climate; a friendly and hospitable people; a remarkable geological structure; mining resources unequalled in the world, on the same extent of surface, affording traces of almost every mineral substance; the flora of a southern climate; exhaustless wealth in its own giant store-house—the ocean; antiquities belonging to the earlier history of the British people; and remnants of [an ancient] language.¹

The purpose of this study is to illustrate Cornwall's distinctive economic and social characteristics during the Industrial Revolution when compared to many other parts of Britain. Between the early eighteenth and mid nineteenth centuries a number of elements can be identified to demonstrate that Cornwall's experience was different. An overriding influence was that Cornwall was one of the earliest industrial regions in Britain. A number of other factors contributed to the county's unique industrialisation. One was that early industrial change determined economic and social marginality. A second was the dominance of Cornish society by the dynamism of the mining industry. A third was that Cornwall's industry became overspecialised, resulting in a vulnerability that limited growth and expansion, eventuating in economic stagnation. A fourth was a separate Cornish identity and difference from most of England, for which an important determinant was Cornwall's peripherality that was part of a broader experience including Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

To understand Cornwall's industrialisation it is necessary to discuss the meaning of the term 'Industrial Revolution'. Much has been written about Britain and the Industrial Revolution causing an enormous upheaval of society and in the landscape. Cotton, steel, engineering and chemical production became some of the basic industries, there was a shift of employment from agriculture to industry, a sustained increase in population, a rise of the middle classes, the transfer of political power

¹ Cyrus Redding, *Illustrated itinerary of the County of Cornwall*, (London, 1842), p.1.

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from the landowner to the industrial capitalist, a massive increase in Britain's economic wealth, fewer people self employed and more working for wages, and a new urban society gradually appeared. However, describing this period as a 'revolution' because of a dramatic social and economic upheaval has become a cliché.

Consequently, modern thought on the Industrial Revolution, which can be better related to Cornwall's industrial experience, questions many of these traditional postulations. Examples of the conventional definitions include the following. "The term Industrial Revolution is used to describe profound economic transformations resulting from the introduction of new technologies of production".² Another definition includes "the sudden acceleration of technical and economic development that began in Britain in the second half of the eighteenth century"³. And *The Economist* maintains that "The industrial revolution gave an utterly new shape to Britain's economy, its population, its cities and its society."⁴ Current thought suggests that the term Industrial Revolution is a misnomer, because it implies a sudden and dramatic change, as described in the above definitions. Industrialisation was a long drawn out process that was erratic, and varied from industry to industry, county to county and region to region. Cornwall is an excellent example of a different industrialisation experience compared to the above generalisations. A difficulty is to determine a starting point of the 'Industrial Revolution', as technological change did not necessarily start with the machine builders; it all depended on earlier advances.⁵ However, solely for the purposes of this study the Industrial Revolution in Northern England will be considered to have occurred between 1770 and 1850, in order to clarify Cornwall's earlier industrialisation compared to the North.

² A. Chandler, *The visible hand. Industrial Revolution the readers companion to American history, 1991*, [on-line serial], Available WWW: elibrary.com/s/edumark/getdoc.cgi.ia.

³ Industrial Revolution, in *The Hutchinson Dictionary of British History*, 1998, [on-line]. Available WWW: elibrary.com/s/edumark/getdoc.cgi.id=2118901...:US;Lib&dtype=u~u&dinst.

⁴ The workshop of a new society: 1670-1850, Vol. *The economist* [on-line serial], (353). 1999. Available WWW: elibrary.com/s/edumark/getdoc.cgi.id=21189014...:US;Lib&dtype=u~u&dinst.

⁵ *Ibid.*

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Many developments associated with the Industrial Revolution had already occurred elsewhere, including Cornwall. Jack Goldstone revised socio-economic history in his article entitled *The Rise of the West-or /not?* To briefly summarise, Goldstone points out that many 'improvements', in society such as capitalist enterprise, trade, and population control, which were once accredited to the European civilisation, had in fact existed in earlier times in such civilisations as China. Goldstone explains this is "because all too often, we view world history in terms of "winners" and 'losers', elevate to prominence much in the 'winners' history, and obscure or lose sight of similar items in the history of retrospective 'losers'".⁶ This premise can also be applied to the Industrial Revolution. Like China, Cornwall has also been discarded as an important component in Britain's industrialisation process.

By comparing each of the conventional developments in the Industrial Revolution in turn, it will question Cornwall's part played in it, if, in John Rule's words "the idea of industrial revolution has a validity".⁷ However, if Cornwall's industrialisation process is related to Goldstone's assertions, a different basis on to which to rest the county's industrial experience is uncovered.

One development in the Industrial Revolution was the "essence of the Industrial Revolution lies in the transformation through technology of manufacturing and in its reorganisation into a new factory mode of production".⁸ Factories, in the true sense of the word, or manufacturing, had not existed in Cornwall on a large scale at any time during industrialisation. A few exceptions will be discussed later. Another point was, as discussed previously, the term 'Industrial Revolution' "exaggerates the suddenness and completeness of actual happenings".⁹ Cornwall was experiencing industrialisation in connection with the mining industry for centuries. According to John Rowe, although copper mining existed since medieval times, copper being mined on a commercial scale from the 1690s marked the beginning of the Industrial

⁶ Jack A. Goldstone, 'The rise of the West-or not? A revision to socio-economic history?' *Sociological Theory* 182-1, (2000), p. 177.

⁷ John Rule, *The labouring classes in early industrial England 1750-1850*, (Harlow, 1987), p. 7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁹ *Ibid.*

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Revolution in Cornwall.¹⁰ However it was more specifically Thomas Newcomen's conversion of steam to power in Cornwall that heralded rapid change in Cornwall when first introduced in 1712, and which then spearheaded many of the changes in mining that were to come in industrial Britain. As to the "completeness" of the Industrial Revolution, after being technically the most advanced mining centre in the world, Cornwall's industry was to stagnate due to what Philip Payton describes as "incomplete" and "imperfect" industrialisation.¹¹ And this "imperfectness" will be seen to be directly linked to Cornwall's overspecialisation in mining.

A further point was that the Industrial Revolution manifested the evolution of industrial capitalism and the growth of a wage dependent labour force.¹² Cornwall had been using a wage dependent work force for generations, and had evolved a unique financial management method and a "ticketing" system, which involved risk sharing by both employers and workers. Another development was the shift in the labour force away from agriculture and into manufacturing.¹³ Cornish labourers traditionally moved between mining, agriculture and fishing depending on the seasonal availability of work. And the final point considered here was that the nineteenth century revealed an increasing number of workers becoming a part of a workforce on a single site. Cornwall has a long history of tin and copper mining; some copper mines were employing a thousand people at one time, (Wheal Alfred employed more than 1000 workers in 1790), and were raising capital from a multiplicity of shareholders and selling their ores through a central marketing agency.¹⁴ These interpretations of the general assumptions about the Industrial Revolution, when related to Cornwall, question the county's process of industrialisation. Nevertheless, when next we consider Goldstone's views it will be seen that Cornwall's experience was a form of industrialisation, however different or limited.

¹⁰ John Rowe, *Cornwall in the age of the Industrial Revolution*, (St. Austell, 1993), p. 2.

¹¹ Philip Payton, *The making of modern Cornwall*, (Redruth, 1992), p.77.

¹² Rule, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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The above observations, and many other facets attributed to the Industrial Revolution, were not, as Goldstone says, “new in global history.”¹⁵ To consider Goldstone again, he believes three fundamental breakthroughs, that were wholly new and centred in England, instigated the Industrial Revolution.¹⁶ The first was the prevention in England of cultural conformity and religious orthodoxy as the basis for strong and stable political structures, the second was the resulting rise of a Newtonian culture using a deductive mechanistic view, and the third was the ensuing conversion of steam to energy.¹⁷ And this is where Cornwall became a leader in technological innovation. Newcomen managed to solve the engineering problem of pumping water from the copper mines in Cornwall by inventing a steam-powered pump, the forerunner to James Watt’s steam engine, thus engineering motion, the principle on which all manufacturing, transportation, and milling relied.¹⁸ The freeing up of the mining industry in Cornwall from the costs and limitations of animal, human, wind and water power activated rapid growth and expansion. Unfortunately the steam engine was only practicable where there was abundant and extremely cheap fuel for heat, that is, close to ample sources of coal.¹⁹ This is where Cornwall’s progress stumbled while the Midlands and the north prospered.

All of this points toward a Cornish industrial culture that developed quite differently, and separately to the rest of Britain. This dissertation examines Cornwall, as an example of the diversity within Britain in the era of industrialisation. This analysis will be modelled on ideas postulated by John Rowe, Philip Payton and Bernard Deacon. Cornwall’s pre-eminence in technological innovation facilitated rapid industrialisation that expanded throughout the county, carried out by an innovative and determined people. The Cornish people reflected the traditional independence of earlier centuries but also embraced the new culture of a distinctive industrialised society. This industrialisation was therefore achieved independently from the rest of Britain because of Cornwall’s isolation. Minerals were exported and coal and timber necessary for mining were imported, using a number of small ports and harbours.

¹⁵ Goldstone, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

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But, paradoxically, this very isolation was ultimately responsible for the downfall of Cornish industry. According to Philip Payton “this industrial prowess, the Cornish capacity for invention and progress, disguised the underlying characteristics of industrialisation in Cornwall. That great pervasive constant of peripherality - geographical isolation and distance from the seats of economic and political power – to a considerable degree moulded the process of industrialisation, ensuring that it would be imperfect, incomplete and over-specialised”.²⁰ It was largely the lack of coal, and the delay in connecting the railway linkage with the rest of Britain, accentuating Cornwall’s isolation, that retarded smelting and industrial diversification within Cornwall.

Cornwall was the last English county to be connected into the national railway system in 1859.²¹ Before that date few people visited such a remote area. The journey by coach or coastal steamer was lengthy and tedious. Many English men and women knew more about Paris than about Truro. Mention Cornwall to anyone and they had visions of smugglers and villagers plundering wrecks on its rocky coastline, fogs and mists and barren wastes and crags. This was the imagery of what Bernard Deacon describes as ‘West Barbary’, however it was exchanged for the image of an ‘Industrial Civilisation’ influenced by the predominance of mining found by visitors to Cornwall during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.²²

Evidence in support of this changing imagery will be provided by accounts of Cornwall through a selection of contemporary travellers/writers of the eighteenth and mid nineteenth century who made comments on their observations as they journeyed around southwest England. The travellers’ descriptions of what they saw will be employed to illustrate Cornwall’s unique industrialisation, such as innovations in mining which preceded industrialisation in other counties, the growth in the economy followed by a hiatus and stagnation, and the different and inimitable

²⁰ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

²¹ A. Shorter, W. Ravenhill, K. Gregory, *Southwest England*, (London, 1969), p. 4.

²² Bernard Deacon, ‘The hollow jarring of the distant steam engines: images of Cornwall between West Barbary and Delectable Duchy’, in E. Westland (ed.), *Cornwall, the cultural construction of place*, (Penzance, 1997), p. 17.

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Cornish identity. Therefore a number of travellers have been chosen from different time periods and will be used as a cross-comparison with one another.

Devon will be used at times as a comparison for detecting difference in Cornwall, as it was a county also not much affected by the industrialisation in the north, but its experience differed to Cornwall's despite being Cornwall's closest neighbour, and having a number of similarities. Occasionally examples of northern counties will also be used as an important contrast when considering Cornwall's dissimilar industrial, economical and social experience.

Some of these differences between Cornwall and the industrial north will be examined through the comments of the travellers. Other than the differences discussed above, other features will be raised such as population growth, which in the north consequently brought an increased demand for goods and an abundant labour supply that in turn led to urban expansion. Cornwall's population growth was slower, the county had no large cities where industrial expansion offered employment opportunities and there was little rural to urban migration.²³ However, local fluctuations in population occurred following variations in the fortunes of mining, and from the mid nineteenth century people emigrated to the colonies due to the depletion of copper mining in Cornwall. This was caused by Cornwall's overspecialised "imperfect" industrialisation.²⁴

One of the key reasons the midlands and the north expanded industrially, eventually outpacing Cornwall, was due to their large quantities of coal and iron ore relatively close to each other and to the sea. As mentioned above, Cornwall's "imperfect" industrialisation was partly blamed on the lack of coal needed for operating the steam engines, forcing Cornwall to send her metallic minerals outside the county for smelting and manufacturing. The long term effects of this were the inability to expand into secondary industries, and the eventual decline of her mineral resources, which left a hole in her economic capabilities as an industrial region. The travellers'

²³ Rule, *op. cit.*, p.15.

²⁴ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

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comments will be analysed to detect these underlying characteristics of Cornwall's "imperfect" industrialisation.

'Difference' in Cornwall will be examined through the isolation of three themes; *space*, *livings* and *people*. In analysing the travellers' observations it will be seen that Cornwall was considered different to the rest of Britain. This was due to a permutation of the mythology of West Barbary and the existing Industrialised Civilisation, a noticeable inherent pride in character, identity, and culture, as well as spatial myths and traditions viewed alongside authentic space.

The travellers' observations were predominantly on *space*, each having their own definition of space, and what, for them, filled it. So how they viewed what did or did not occupy space on their journey will be ordered and presented, within the parameters of inland and coastal space, to detect differences in the landscape. It was the mining districts of Cornwall which left the traveller with their most vivid impressions, which gave the illusion that the whole of Cornwall was covered in mines when in fact only selected regions were. Representations of Cornish society were, not surprisingly then, strongly influenced by images of mining landscapes. As the travellers moved through Cornwall, their interpretation of space was both juxtaposed with the culture and the people they encountered, and affected by their preconceived notions. Often perceptions were distorted by spatial myths kept alive by these visitors, and the inhabitants, and frequently failed to match the reality of the spaces they actually experienced. As mining tended to dominate inland space in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it took precedence over any observations the travellers made about agriculture. A sense of the growth of mining can be gauged by the travellers' comments about the mining districts they passed through. Beginning with the tin mines witnessed by the earlier travellers and the expansion of the copper mines observed by the later travellers, an overall growth of these districts was evident, and improvements in mining were highlighted. Nevertheless, mining suffered a number of setbacks at times. One was the matter of supply and demand; markets were affected by the European wars, there was competition from alternative suppliers, and overproduction caused problems. Another hindrance was that Cornish engineers' improvements in mechanisation were held back by the patent Boulton and

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Watt had on their engines until 1800. Copper mining moved through a depression period in the 1840s, and then production increased to peak in the late 1850s, only then to eventually collapse altogether due to overseas competition, plummeting ore prices and the cost of keeping the mines going.²⁵ Tin mining, which was prolific when the first travellers moved through Cornwall, became less important in the nineteenth century when copper dominated the industry. However it was able to survive to eventually outlast copper mining.²⁶

The travellers also witnessed a mining industry able to work efficiently, despite being not connected by railway to the rest of Britain until 1859 when Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash linked Penzance to Paddington.²⁷ What is more, Payton highlights the fact that the tramways and railways constructed within Cornwall to link the mines and quarries with the ports "were amongst the earliest built in the United Kingdom".²⁸ For example, Redding found that a short railway had been built between St. Austell and Pentewan.²⁹ This railway had been built in 1826 to serve the needs of the china clay industry.³⁰ However the lack of a railway network for the benefit of the traveller gave the nineteenth century visitor an impression that Cornwall was backward. For example, White took the stagecoach from Padstow to Camelford in 1854, and said it was "a living illustration of what one had almost forgotten", as he was comparing it to the ease of travel on northern England's railway system.³¹

The visitors' interest in the obvious vigour of the mining, and the mechanisation at the sites, arose from the way in which spatial traditions influenced their expectation of what they would find in the landscape. The mining excavations dominated space for them, as they had not expected it to be so busy or developed. For instance, heading toward St. Austell, in 1698, Fiennes was surprised to see at least twenty tin mines within sight, as well as tin smelting where she watched the process of

²⁵ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

²⁶ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

²⁷ A. J. Holland, *The age of Industrial expansion*, (London, 1969), p. 108.

²⁸ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

²⁹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

³⁰ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

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stamping tin and firing it in a furnace.³² Why was she surprised to see so many mines? She had already travelled through coal mining districts in the northern counties. Approaching Newcastle she noted "this country all about is full of this coal ... upon a high hill two mile from Newcastle I could see all about the country which was full of coal pits."³³ It was because her preconceptions of Cornwall did not include an industrialised county: traditional myths had suggested an isolated backwater characterised by smuggling, fishing, and tinning. Daphne du Maurier was able to encapsulate this obscure expectation of how Cornwall's space was shaped by tradition.

Cornwall, little known, of small significance, remains the tail of England, still aloof and rather splendidly detached from the activity across Tamar hailed as progress; yet aware, despite her seeming isolation, that in those distant ages when Britons beyond the river were tilling the soil and grazing cattle, the first settlers near the Land's End were already streaming tin, trading their mineral wealth with successive immigrants from Iberia and the Mediterranean lands to the east.³⁴

Pilchard fishing tended to dominate coastal space for the travellers. The fishing industry was seen to concentrate on seining for pilchards, despite their seasonal run becoming less reliable in the nineteenth century, and like mining, the industry seemed to stagnate while other counties such as Devon diversified into trawling and deep sea fishing.

An analysis will suggest that Cornwall was already deeply involved in industrialisation, and the travellers observed a fully operational, independent economy involved in mining, fishing and agriculture. However in comparing the earlier travellers' reports with those later, industrialisation will be seen to stagnate with no evidence of further growth.

On the theme *livings*, the travellers' comments on the ways people earned their livelihoods will be analysed. Cornwall's livings were dominated by the miners, from the landowners who owned the mines to the merchants and ship owners in the

³¹ Walter White, *A Londoner's walk to the Land's End*, (London, 1865), p. 310.

³² Christopher Morris, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685 – 1712*, (London, 1982), p. 204.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

³⁴ Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, (London, 1972), p. 9.

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ports, and the pilchard fishermen and the farmers who provided seasonal labour. The miners represented Cornwall's early industrialisation, technical expertise and innovative risk sharing. Cornwall traditionally displayed a lack of class-consciousness and therefore social mobility was also a feature of Cornwall's livings. However, over-specialisation in skills resulted in the redundancy of the miners and the seine fisherman in the mid nineteenth century when the copper and pilchards waned.

The final theme, *people*, will analyse and compare the travellers' preconceptions and impressions about the Cornish people. For centuries the rural people in Cornwall were sustained by an almost self-sufficient economy isolated from the rest of England and therefore local customs and loyalties were very strong.³⁵ Virtually all the writers had prejudices about the Cornish people because of this distinction. The travellers witnessed the difference in the conduct and behaviour of the Cornish, their motivation, inventiveness, self-assurance and their lack of deference. These were all characteristics that linked the contrasting imagery of "West Barbary" and "Industrial Civilisation".³⁶ Mining supplied the dominant images in Cornwall of Industrial Civilisation, which overlaid Cornish traditional culture. The Cornish identity was energised by the confidence of their technological inventiveness and their independent nature. The travellers went to Cornwall expecting a people of unique character and customs that fitted the West Barbary image. The impressions they received of the labouring classes were a revelation, discovering an industrialised community compared to the 'barbarians' they expected to find.

Although most of the travellers had favourable impressions of the Cornish people, some were not so favourable, mainly due to the difference in the era in which they travelled, their age, and their class perspective. For example Wilkie Collins and Walter White backpacked around Cornwall and Devon and therefore relied on the locals for help. Hence they gained a liking for the friendly hospitable Cornish people, whereas James Boswell had no contact with them, and therefore retained his aloof, elitist view.

³⁵ Shorter, et al. *op. cit.*, p. 5.

³⁶ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

Contemporary writers/travellers are the primary sources used as evidence in support of the argument that the Industrial Revolution experienced in Cornwall was different and occurred earlier than elsewhere in England. Three writers have been selected from the early eighteenth century when Cornwall was in the process of implementing its pumping technology and steam power in the mining districts. They were Celia Fiennes (1698), Daniel Defoe (1724), and Dr Richard Pococke (1750). Daniel Defoe and his book entitled *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, is an often quoted authority on early eighteenth century England. Therefore comparisons have been made with his observations elsewhere in Britain. Celia Fiennes is also much quoted from *The Great Journey of Celia Fiennes in 1698*. She will be referred to for the earlier period she travelled in, and her interest in the already well established mining industry. Dr. Pococke was an Anglican Bishop who travelled in the 1750s recording his narrative in manuscripts entitled *The Travels Through England of Dr. Richard Pococke*. His observations were important to ascertain the mining industry's development of steam mechanisation since Fiennes' visit.

Four of the writers travelled through the region at the end of the eighteenth century when the Industrial Revolution was beginning to have an effect in some areas in the rest of Britain. They were William Gilpin (1778), Rev. John Swete (1780), James Boswell (1792), and James Forbes (1794). Gilpin and Swete were members of the clergy, Boswell was a Scottish Laird, and Forbes was a gentleman who served some years in India writing for the East India Company. Their comments reveal a great expansion of the mining districts and growth of the nearby towns.

Four travellers visited in the early to mid nineteenth century, Rev. Richard Warner (1809), Richard Ayton and William Daniell (1813), William Daniell alone (1823), and Cyrus Redding (1842), whose annotations reflected a standstill in progress in Cornwall's industrialisation. Daniell's and Ayton's *Voyage Round Great Britain* described a momentous journey following the entire coast of Britain from 1813, reporting on the scenery, the customs and beliefs, and the social conditions of the people. It provides information on the coastal differences in Cornwall compared to elsewhere in England. Warner and Redding were very descriptive and receptive to

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economic differences noticed in Cornwall. Redding in particular showed a compassion for Cornwall having spent the first twenty years of his life there.

The final three from the mid Victorian period, Wilkie Collins (1850), Walter White (1854) and Thomas Mills (1863), observed the counties and their people when the Industrial Revolution was at its height in parts of northern England. Collins, White and Mills travelled with hindsight, having experienced the changes in the north, and therefore were receptive to the differences in Cornwall. They were on recreational holidays, Mills was 'sightseeing' and White and Collins were backpacking, a pastime which was new to the southwest.

Also, because they were journeying throughout the rest of England, including Devon, and therefore provide a yardstick on which to measure signs of difference and Cornwall's unique industrial experience, Frances and Alexandre La Rochefoucauld (1785), and William Cobbett (1833) will also be referred to. The La Rochefoucauld brothers were French aristocrats very interested in industrial and agricultural inventions, and Cobbett was unimpressed with signs of change and improvement.

Despite these travellers' differing perspectives due to their age, background, mode of travel and time and reason for travelling, and the presence of the popular mythology of West Barbary images in their writings, by making cross comparisons, they recorded a unique experience of industrialisation to the rest of Britain. The travellers' observations discovered an earlier industrialisation process due to the invention of the steam pump, but then, due to Cornwall's over-specialisation in mining, and to a lesser extent in the county's fishing industry, their records showed that little progress was made beyond these advancements.



Fowey from Bodenick, Cornwall

Illustration by William Daniell in William Daniell, *A voyage Round Great Britain*, Vol. Viii, (London, 1778,) p.43.

Space frequently mirrors the values of a culture – its social relationships, power structures, religious and cosmological ideas – and re-enacts patterns of place.¹

Space is filled with the interaction of the shape and form of geography and landscape articulated in a pattern of spaces expressed, for example, as towns, coastal scenery or mining landscapes that are closely related to cultural identity, and are “a fingerprint that brands a culture as unique”.² As the travellers moved through Cornwall, their interpretation of space was juxtaposed with both the culture and the people they encountered, and affected by their preconceived notion of this county. Spatial entities, such as fishing ports, colour the way inhabitants see their own place, and influence visitors’ expectations of what they will find. How space is shaped and how, in turn, the people are shaped by the same spaces that are most recognizable and enduring to them, resound throughout many lifetimes and provide a reference point for understanding a sense of place. Often perceptions have been distorted by spatial myths kept alive by these very visitors and inhabitants, and frequently fail to match the reality of spaces they actually experience. Space in eighteenth and mid nineteenth century Cornwall was particularly susceptible to such misconceptions, as implied by the writings of the travellers. Therefore to clarify the interpretation of space, and to aid in being more selective from the mass of information written by the travellers on space, its features have been divided by relationship to a common spatial theme. These divisions consist of inland space and coastal space, focusing on towns and ports by their functions. Inland space consists of mining and agriculture whilst coastal space consists of fishing and trading.

Within the context of these themes, the analysis will suggest that Cornwall was already deeply involved in industrialisation, and instead of the travellers finding a backwater, they observed a resourceful, fully operational independent economy involved in mining, fishing and agriculture. However, in comparing the earlier travellers’ reports with those who followed, it can be assumed that industrialisation involved a desperate upheaval of the landscape in the search for more copper, only to

¹ Philip Drew, *The coast dwellers*, (Ringwood, 1994), p. xi.

² *Ibid.*, p. xii.

be eventually outstripped by the diversification developing in the north in a progressive industrialisation that was to outlast Cornwall's initial prominence.

To begin, a brief description of the Cornish landscape is necessary to invoke a sense of place. Along the centre of the county on an east – west axis there is a ridge of hills, disconnected from those of Dartmoor, in Devon, by the deep valley through which the Tamar winds its course nearly from sea to sea which is the natural, and official border between Cornwall and Devon. Here and there along the ridge appears a tor, or granite hilltop. The westward continuation of this chain of hills gradually subsides in elevation until Land's End is reached. The rivers descend on both sides of the range, the largest flowing on the southern side. The northern slope from the great central ridge is bounded by the sea, terminating in most places in steep sided cliffs that continue northwards up the coast of Devon. The southern slope is comparatively longer and less abrupt, although with deep valleys indenting the coastline.

The central ridge causes a difference in climate between the northern and southern coast of Cornwall until the hills decrease in height toward the west. There the Atlantic Ocean winds sweep uninterrupted across the narrowing peninsula. Celia Fiennes noticed the nets of straw spun to lay over the thatch on the Cornish cottages with weights of stone to prevent the thatch being blown away by the powerful winds.³ The southern side is more protected and is a continuation of the southern coast of Devon with similar mild weather, although it does frequently receive the southwesterlies, often along with a fine rain compared to the driving rain on the northern coast.⁴

The isolation of Cornwall is due mainly to its geographical features, the fact that it is peninsular like, and surrounded by water if the Tamar River is counted on its eastern border with Devon.⁵ It is the only English county to have only one border, which secludes it even further. Jaggard points out that Land's End is as far distant from

³ Christopher Morris, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685 – 1712*, (London, 1982), p. 209.

⁴ John Rowe, *Cornwall in the age of the Industrial Revolution*, (St. Austell, 1993), p. 209.

⁵ Edwin Jaggard, *Cornwall politics in the age of reform 1790 - 1885*, (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 8.

London as Kirkcudbright in south-western Scotland, and county Wexford in the Irish Republic.⁶ This is appropriate as it is part of the culturally distinctive 'celtic fringe' along with Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

When compared to neighbouring Devon, obvious differences with Cornwall commented on by visitors in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries, were Devon's fertile fields and wooded valleys encircled with hedged lanes. The similarities included the barren moors and genial climate along the southern shores.

Because of Cornwall's distinguishing features, and the West Barbary image of smuggling and wrecking, many people in the rest of England thought of it as a different country. White commented on this when he wrote, "frequently did I fancy myself out of England while in Cornwall, and anyone able to use his eyes may well be pardoned for the illusion".⁷ He again commented on this later when he spoke of the predominance of Tre, Pol and Pen as the first syllables in Cornish names. "Under the influence of these strange names, the peculiarities of the people, and unfamiliar landscape features, it seemed to me more than once that I was in a foreign country, and I caught myself saying in conversation— "When I get back to England".⁸

The travellers' initial viewpoint of space in Cornwall varied depending on which route he or she entered the county. The most direct route was to enter from Devon via Exeter and Okehampton following the road that is now the A30. This way took the traveller through Bodmin Moor, along the spine of Cornwall. An alternative approach was from Plymouth in Devon and along Cornwall's southern coast. A third, not so popular route also existed along the northern corridor from Bideford. During the period of this study, there was not an efficient network of railways, and the roads were very poor and potholed, therefore visitors could also choose to enter Cornwall by sea, through either Falmouth or Hayle.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷ Walter White, *A Londoner's walk to the Land's End*, (London, 1865), p. 179.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

These different approaches elicited various reactions to Cornwall from the travellers. For example in 1778 William Gilpin entered on the main thoroughfare to Launceston and then proceeded across the moor to Bodmin. His preconceived notion of a wasteland was confirmed by this route and consequently gave him the impression that all of Cornwall was similar. And this was the general impression most people had of Cornwall who had never explored it themselves. "We travelled ...through a coarse naked country, and in all respects as uninteresting as can well be conceived. Of wood, in every shape, it was utterly destitute. Having heard that the country beyond Bodmin was exactly like what we had already passed, we resolved to travel no farther in Cornwall."⁹

Two years later Swete, travelling on the same road in 1780, realized how misleading this first impression of Cornwall was when he said it was a "bleak and exposed situation ...[which] gave me a more unfavourable opinion of the county than I afterwards found it in general deserved".¹⁰ However he did comment that the road was the best he had travelled on, made of moorstone gravel and wide enough for four carriages, which certainly would have been a pleasure after travelling through Devon's narrow lanes which Celia Fiennes in 1698 had described as in bad repair full of stones and dirt, and wide enough only for a single horse to pass.¹¹

The Scotsman James Boswell in 1792, (and Gilpin), compared Cornwall to Scotland. "I felt a curious sensation on entering Cornwall, of which I had thought so long. The country had quite the appearance of many of the bad parts of Scotland. It had the wildness of our highlands without the grandeur".¹² He also found the country from Launceston to Bodmin and onwards "as dreary as any I had ever seen".¹³ Thirty years later when Warner went over the same road the message of wild Cornwall had obviously not changed for first-time travellers. "We had at length a specimen of the denuded scenery which we had been taught to expect through a journey of many

⁹ William Gilpin, *Observations on the western parts of England*, (Richmond, 1973), p. 192.

¹⁰ Rev. John Swete, 'A Tour in Cornwall in 1780', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 6,3 (1971), p.194.

¹¹ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

¹² James Boswell, 'Jaunt to Cornwall August to September 1792', privately printed papers from the *Journal of James Boswell*, prepared by G. Scott, & F. Pottle, (1934), p. 11.

¹³ *Ibid.*

days".¹⁴ This is an example of a spatial myth that had been, using Warner's term, "taught". Warner, like others before and after him, held a preconceived image of Cornish space. To demonstrate the unjustness of those comments some of the travellers made the same remarks about Devon, of it being a wild, barren, poor country when entering from Launceston. Defoe, in 1724 called Devon an "unpleasant country", as did Gilpin in 1778.¹⁵ However the difference with Cornwall in this area was that Devon's scenery quickly changed on the way to Okehampton or Tavistock, to larger more populated towns.¹⁶ And unlike Bodmin Moor in Cornwall, Pococke described Dartmoor as having many rivers rising from it, with villages gathered around the foot of the Dartmoor hills. These hills provided turf supplies, and feed for the cattle in summer, and grazed 100, 000 sheep, something not found on the moors of neighbouring Cornwall.¹⁷

In contrast, James Forbes was conscious of the myth, but found the reality different when he entered Cornwall in 1794 along the alternative southern route from Plymouth. He was very surprised as it was "much superior to what I had been prepared to expect".¹⁸ This time the myth that the entire county was barren had been exposed. Forbes thought the countryside was well cultivated with a few hamlets and gentleman's seats, and interspersed with open heathy common were woody, rural glens. He said, "the different features the country assumes, in quick succession, from these soft and woody scenes, to rude uncultivated heaths and unbounded views, finely contrast each other, and are peculiar to this county".¹⁹ This landscape of contrasts so characteristic of Cornwall contrasted with Devon's "hills, ... tame and uniform, following each other in such quick succession".²⁰ Devon's uniformity was better described by Ayton, "the whole country from the sea to the horizon ... was

¹⁴ Revd. Richard Warner, *A tour through Cornwall in the autumn of 1808*, (London, 1809), p.84.

¹⁵ Daniel Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain*, (Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 245, and Gilpin, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

¹⁶ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

¹⁷ James Joel Cartwright, (ed.) *The travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke* Vol II, (London, 1965), p. 137.

¹⁸ James Forbes, "Tour into Cornwall to the Land's End", *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 4,2 (1983), p. 160.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 161.

²⁰ Gilpin, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

extended in uniform luxuriance ... teeming with vegetation."²¹ Forbes mused, "I am most surprised in Cornwall to see the fertile valleys and rich woody glens ... because most travellers represent it only as a heathy, bleak, barren country". This was because many travellers entered into central Cornwall on the main thoroughfare through the moor.

Redding best explained this when he pointed out "the great mail-road to the west lies by Launceston through this wild [moor], and hence, naturally enough, strangers have conceived an idea of the county very different from the truth".²² Daniell in 1823 recognised the disillusionment this road gave visitors to Cornwall who "judging from what can be seen from a carriage on the highway, have pronounced this to be the least inviting of the English counties. ... The ridge of bare and rugged hills intermixed with bleak moors, ... and over which the main road passes, had produced impressions not only of sterility but of loneliness", and they did not go further to investigate the "pockets of fertility and beauty" which can be found in Cornwall.²³ Hence Collins in his letter of introduction to the readers of his book *Rambles Beyond Railways*, written in 1850, spoke of a county that is "too rarely visited and too little known".²⁴ The above travellers were beginning to distinguish between spatial myth and spatial reality.

Nevertheless, Walter White, upon entering Cornwall across the Tamar from Plymouth, explained that "at once you are struck with the difference between the county you are in and the one you have left. It is obvious. The generally soft features of Devonshire are exchanged for a landscape of a stern and unfinished aspect. Trees are few; and you see a prominent characteristic of Cornwall, a surface heaved into long, rolling swells, brown and bare ... cut up into squares by thick

²¹ Richard Ayton & William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813, Vol I*, (London, 1978), p. 34.

²² Cyrus Redding, *Illustrated itinerary of the county of Cornwall*, (London, 1843), p.3.

²³ William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813*, Vol. VIII, (London, 1978), p.40.

²⁴ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles beyond railways*, (London, 1982), p. 2.

stone fences".²⁵ This was a sharp contrast to Devon's "hills and enclosures with quickset hedges and trees."²⁶

The travellers' observations are analysed within functional understandings of inland space. As previously discussed, the moor between Bodmin and Launceston presented an image to the traveller, which encapsulated their image of Cornwall. Therefore other similar areas are investigated first, to reveal only relatively small parts of Cornwall were barren wastelands. When some of the travellers journeyed between Falmouth and Helston, in the southwestern corner of Cornwall they were reminded of their first impressions of Cornwall across much the same terrain as the Bodmin moors. They passed over "upland rocky heathy moors ... a specimen of that unfavourable aspect by which travellers are too apt to judge of the whole of this singular county".²⁷ Forbes travelled in 1794, illustrating once again the misconceptions held by the rest of England of the county of Cornwall.

Although the road to Land's End, which was ten miles from Penzance, was not as elevated as the moors, due to the prevailing onshore winds, it created much the same aspect. Celia Fiennes rode up and down hills, along steep and narrow lanes, which were not sheltered with either trees or hedgerows. She thought that it all looked rather desert-like, the fields stony with dry stone walls, and compared the scenery to the Peak country in Derbyshire.²⁸ Defoe in 1724 had described the Peak district as inhospitable, rugged and wild.²⁹ These were terms that may readily have been applied to those parts of Cornwall. Nearly one hundred years later Forbes described this journey showing little had changed. Upon leaving Penzance he found the countryside to be rural and pleasant, with valleys shaded in trees and then "they all disappeared". Not a tree in sight, nor a hedge, fields divided by smooth stones from three to six feet high, set up in rows, or earth and stones tufted with furze which was used for fuel.³⁰

²⁵ White, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

²⁶ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

²⁷ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

²⁸ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

²⁹ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

³⁰ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

The “disagreeable heaths called downs”, as described by Pococke, prevailed between Land’s End and St. Ives.³¹ Pococke in 1750 did not observe any cultivation, but came across old tin works along the hills. Bounders were put up, which were poles to show who was working on their tin works.³² However thirty years later Swete travelled through this wild, barren country “thickset” with “craggy karns”, and noticed pockets of farming. He said it “has the appearance of population from many a little hamlet scattered over its face, surrounded now and then by a few green fields, with a few sheep, wild colts, geese and goats upon them”.³³ Treen was an example of a small hamlet in 1854 on the southern side of Penwith, which White described as “a rude little village, the sight of which might make you fancy the world had gone back two hundred years”.³⁴ These hamlets showed no signs of change from the seventeenth through to the nineteenth century. In 1850, Collins thought that this area “displayed some of the dreariest views that we had yet beheld in Cornwall”.³⁵ This area was the non-industrial face of Cornwall.

Yet industry, represented by mining, was never far away, as Pococke discovered with his remarks about the tin mining. Mining took precedence over any observations the travellers made about agriculture, as it tended to dominate space in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although mining had always been an important element in shaping the economy and character of the Cornish people, it was given an overnight boost in the early seventeen hundreds with the advent of new technology such as the steam engine and improved methods of ore separation, which caused new engine houses and ore stamping machines to spring up across the countryside, leaving traditional methods behind. The travellers’ obsession with mining was confirmation of Cornwall’s own ‘Industrial Revolution’ operating independently from the rest of Britain, isolated from its influence. Evidence of this ‘overnight boost’ along with the independence of the industry can be frequently identified in the travellers’ writings.

³¹ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

³⁴ White, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

³⁵ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

Dr Richard Pococke in 1750 came across some stream works at Par, near St. Austell, where the workers used traditional methods when he saw them washing tin stones and grains to the bottom of the hill from the lodes or veins of tin on the hillside above.³⁶ This was a method commonly used to wash out the surface tin. As the stream works of alluvial tin such as Pococke had seen, particularly further east, were becoming exhausted, deeper mining was being undertaken.³⁷ "Nothing can be more dreary, then the aspect of the earth's surface in these districts" was Redding's thought when he visited the same area 144 years after Fiennes.³⁸ He was particularly referring to the Carclaze mine, still productive after 400 years, which was excavated out of a huge hill creating a punchbowl a mile in circumference and thirty fathoms deep.³⁹

The improvements in technology were also witnessed. Fiennes wrote in 1698 that there was "great labour and great expense to drain the mines of water with mills that horses turn and now they have the mills or water engines that are turned by the water, which is conveyed on frames of timber and trunks to hold the water, which falls down on the wheels, as an over shot mill."⁴⁰ The simple overshot water-wheel was the main source of power during Fiennes times, and many such wheels were being used to drain mines in the St. Austell district before 1700.⁴¹ As Fiennes continued west she "passed by one hundred mines, some on which they were at work, others that were lost by the waters overwhelming them".⁴² Within fifty years Pococke, in 1750, saw tin works at Polgooth and Chacewater, where they had a "fire engine to pump the water out at".⁴³ The engines, designed and constructed by Thomas Newcomen, were two of the first three operating in Cornwall at the time, although they began selling very quickly to other mining operations, being more efficient than the water driven engines Fiennes saw.⁴⁴ It was Newcomen's steam

³⁶ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³⁷ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

³⁸ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

⁴¹ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁴² Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

⁴³ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁴⁴ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

engines which set in motion Cornwall's 'Industrial Revolution', extended the mining regions due to its ability to pump water from the ever deepening mines, and was the precursor to James Watt's improved steam engine, and hence the industrial expansion of the rest of Britain.

Between Fiennes' visit and that of Walter White in 1854, these mining works had expanded, and using the new engines they were able to probe deeper underground, and were now also mining copper. It was the noise White first heard as he approached the busy mining district near St. Austell.

Then come paths across flats of dirty water; the noise of the ore-crushing machinery—thump, thump, thump—heard for miles; and you see iron rods stretching away furlongs in length, ... what could they be? Suddenly some unseen power gives one of them a pull a yard or two to the right or left, with a jerking clank, followed by a watery gush. It is a pump-rod ... impelled by the engine, which is too far off to be visible, and keeping the workings beneath your feet free from water. The hill beyond presents a curious medley of machinery and trees; a spectacle for one unaccustomed to the mining districts.⁴⁵

Both Fiennes and Pococke did not come to any copper mines until west of Truro. This would have been because nearly all the copper ore raised in Cornwall before 1770 had been mined in the region between Truro and Hayle. The copper mines of the St. Austell district only became prominent after 1812.⁴⁶ Therefore the depth of mines needed for mining copper, increased proportionately with the improvement in mechanically operated pumps and the passing of the years.

James Boswell in 1792 toured some of the mines in the Truro district, one of which was Poldice. He met William Murdoch, a superintendent of Boulton and Watt's engines he observed working, and was impressed by their power.⁴⁷ Manufacturer Matthew Boulton and inventor James Watt dominated the mechanical side of copper mining for a quarter of century from 1775, holding monopolistic rights on their engines, which impeded the progress of Cornish engineering and mining.⁴⁸ The end

⁴⁵ White, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

⁴⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁴⁷ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

of their patent in 1800 precipitated a great era of experimentation and vast improvements in steam engines were recorded. Redding was fascinated by these engines and described these improvements in detail. "We are thus minute because we shall presently state the enormous power and duty of the existing steam engines of Cornwall, of which so little is known out of the county, and which have no parallel elsewhere." He makes the comparison of 115 Lancashire engines not equalling two Cornish engines.⁴⁹ Payton states that "the technological innovation which accompanied Cornwall's mining pre-eminence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries not only facilitated rapid industrialisation but led to the emergence of Cornwall as a principal centre of engineering expertise."⁵⁰

Not far from the towns of Penryn and Falmouth, the travellers witnessed more evidence of mining as it intensified toward Redruth and further west. When James Boswell visited this region in 1792, he thought the heaps of earth thrown out of the mines seemed like huts from a distance. "The country has a waste appearance by the soil being pared for fuel".⁵¹ Warner, sixteen years later was more descriptive. He said that mining

levels the little wood, ... penetrates into the earth, and covers the neighbouring soil with unproductive rubbish. It proceeds to poison the brooks around with its mineral impregnations, spreads far and wide. The sulphurous smoke of its smelting-houses blasting vegetation with their deleterious vapours, obscuring the atmosphere with the infernal fumes of arsenic and sulphur. ... It appeared to us like a district filled with extinguished volcanoes, which, having exhausted their fury, could now only be traced in the universal desolation they had occasioned.⁵²

The countryside from Hayle toward the northeast through Camborne and Redruth had similar reports from its visitors over the one hundred and sixty five years from Fiennes' visit in 1698 to Mills' visit in 1863, however the increase in mechanisation was obvious. Fiennes rode "over heath and downs which was very bleak and full of mines".⁵³ Defoe in 1724 "observed the hills fruitful of tin, copper and lead ... to the

⁴⁹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁵⁰ Philip Payton, *The making of modern Cornwall*, (Redruth, 1992), p. 75.

⁵¹ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁵² Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁵³ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

other shore".⁵⁴ Swete in 1780 did not consider the wealth of the mines as Defoe did, but only saw the "face deformed by the rubbish thrown up by the mines".⁵⁵ Forbes in 1794 thought the country to be barren, with no tree visible, "hill and dales, heaths and commons were covered with heaps of stones, ore, and ashes, blackened by the smoke from the adjacent smelting houses ... full of mines" and miners' huts, bleak and dreary reminding him of a Siberian desert.⁵⁶ By 1850, mining is still the most important industry in this area, as portrayed by Collins.

We now passed through the central part of the mining district of Cornwall. Chimney and engine houses chequered the surface of the landscape; the roads glittered with metallic particles, ... towns showed a sudden increase in importance; villages grew large and populous.⁵⁷

And four years later in 1854, White described the scene before him.

All around the horizon ... is mines. A hungry landscape, everywhere deformed by small mountains of many-coloured refuse; traversed in all directions by narrow paths and winding roads, by streams of foul water, by screaming locomotives with hurrying trains; whirling and vibrating, the forest of tall beams, make up an astonishing maze of machinery and motion. Giant arms of Steam-engines swing up and down; and the stamping-mills appear to try which can thunder loudest, proclaiming afar the progress made in disembowelling the bountiful old earth.⁵⁸

So far the travellers have been observing space above ground. Boswell described the deep mines where "miners go down sometimes perpendicularly in iron buckets, sometimes by steep ladders from one depth to another, descending transversely".⁵⁹ An extraordinarily deep mine extending under the bed of the sea was Botallack, near Cape Cornwall. Botallack was visited by Redding in 1842 who described it as an "astonishing undertaking" where an "enormous steam engine had to be lowered 200 feet down a rocky cliff ... and here mules and their riders may be seen trotting down tracks that the pedestrian stranger trembles to pass".⁶⁰ Collins in 1850 illustrated the astonishing scene. "Chains, pipes, conduits, protruded in all directions from the precipice; rotten-looking wooden platforms, running over deep chasms, supported

⁵⁴ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁵⁵ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

⁵⁶ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

⁵⁷ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁵⁸ White, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

⁵⁹ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁶⁰ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

great beams of timber and heavy coils of cable".⁶¹ Walter White in 1854 saw it as very busy, "for here the labour goes on as in a factory". He saw tramways and trains of wagons running to and fro where once donkeys and mules did the carrying.⁶² Once again, even in such difficult terrain, steam power had replaced animal power. However Botallack was beginning to suffer the signs of what was to become of the rest of Cornwall's copper industry from the 1860s. Collins in 1850 commented on Botallack's struggles. "The price of copper has fallen of late years, the lodes have proved neither so rich nor so extensive, as at past periods; and the mine when we visited Cornwall, had failed to pay the expenses of working it".⁶³

Expansion and progress in the mining industry had been made over the intervening years since Fiennes' visit; with the improvement to the steam engines replacing the water driven mills, and trains replacing the packhorses, the mining had spread and delved deeper into the earth's surface. The appearance of the landscape had transformed in many parts from heath to the destruction caused by the upheaval of the earth in the search for copper. Cornwall's space was becoming dominated by an industrial landscape of pumping machinery, noise and commotion. However the overspecialisation in mining was evident by the travellers' reports, with little diversification into other industrial activities as would have been encountered in the Midlands and the north, particularly by the late eighteenth and nineteenth century travellers. Although branching out into engineering was an element in industrial Cornwall, its concentration on building mining equipment was typical of the Cornish "all-encompassing passion for mining affairs", a contributing factor to the lack of diversification.⁶⁴ A number of other factors served to retard industrial diversification in Cornwall. The trading cycle with south Wales, exchanging coal for copper ore for smelting, (discussed in more detail later), dispelled the impetus to pursue Cornish smelting and other industrial activities.⁶⁵ Payton quotes Burt as stating, "the smelting and manufacture of metallic minerals was generally forced outside of the region to areas where fuel was plentiful and cheap. The secondary industries which

⁶¹ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁶² White, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

⁶³ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁶⁴ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

developed within the county related only to primary mining and quarrying activity".⁶⁶ There was also a general hostility from the Cornish toward outside interest which frustrated investment or diversification attempts by 'foreign' investors.⁶⁷ Another factor was a stubborn determination to sustain ailing mines in the hope of striking better lodes. Burt had argued "that the overall sale of ore from Cornish mines never did repay the total investment in the industry, a significant factor in the explanation for the Cornish economy's failure to expand or diversify as mining became less important."⁶⁸

The Cornish economy's over reliance on copper mining was to be a major cause of the eventual demise of industrialisation in Cornwall. An example of the diversification in the north was the La Rochefoucauld brothers' journey in 1785, when having left cotton-mills in Derby, within a short journey they managed to visit various sites from the raising of iron ore, iron foundries, tar and coke works, tin mines, coal mines, to steel works. "From Wolverhampton to Birmingham we saw nothing but houses and factories. For fourteen miles we are really in one continuous town."⁶⁹

Industrial space included a relatively new industry when compared to the age of mining. The mid eighteenth century saw the beginning of the china clay industry, "which was destined to survive copper mining and to become the most important industry in Cornwall".⁷⁰ Most of the china clay came from the St. Austell area near St. Stephens, where Warner said they produced the clay for china manufacturing in Staffordshire and Wales.⁷¹ White in 1854 described this district as busy with "pumps working, wheels revolving, white torrents flowing ... extending far into the dreary district north to St. Columb".⁷² "The white paths, banks, and levels made

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Norman Scarfe, *Innocent espionage the de la Rochefoucauld brothers tour of England in 1785*, (Woodbridge, 1995), p. 106.

⁷⁰ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁷¹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁷² White, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

strange chequer-work among the dark patches of heath".⁷³ The decline in the demand for tin and copper was partly compensated by the increased interest in china clay.

The mythology of space tended to decree that the industrial landscape dominated space because it had the greatest influence on the travellers. In actuality, agriculture still covered a greater percentage of the land than industrial space. However, it is noticeable how mining influenced many aspects of Cornwall's economy at the time, even agriculture. Redding pointed out "the more productive districts are placed on both sides of the high central ridge".⁷⁴ The main agricultural areas were in the eastern part of Cornwall where arable farming predominated, and in small pockets along the north and south coasts. Redding noticed that "many farmers follow the later improvement in husbandry, but too many continue wedded to old prejudices. We may add that Cornwall in general now partakes in the agricultural improvements of our other counties, in reference to tillage and the breed of stock".⁷⁵ Jaggard states that generally Cornish agriculture flourished in the eighty years after 1790 mainly in the central western regions where improving landlords such as Sir Christopher Hawkins and Sir Francis Basset (created Baron De Dunstanville in 1796) owned substantial estates.⁷⁶ Rowe suggests that the examples of the mines introduced mechanical methods into agriculture such as steam threshing machines (the first was used by Sir Christopher Hawkins) and in farm transport. As Redding mentioned above, improvements were made in the breeding of livestock, for example de Dunstanville Basset had experimented with Dorset sheep and Scottish cattle.⁷⁷

White in 1854 noticed much improvement in the cultivation of the heathland in Penwith.

You see numerous small holdings; some under good cultivation, others but partially cleared. With good management they grow good crops of potatoes, barley and wheat. Should this continue, West Penwith will cease to look desolate; and a succession of fruitful fields will be seen even to the Land's

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

⁷⁴ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Jaggard, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁷⁷ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

End. In other parts of the county the miners, each taking a little patch, have cleared much of the waste.⁷⁸

These improvements had been made since Fiennes visit in 1698 when she described this area; "to the Land's End is stone and barren".⁷⁹ These improvements White noted in agriculture, mainly in west Cornwall, were largely due to reclamation of wasteland encouraged by the landowners such as De Dunstanville. Miners were encouraged to build cottages and enclose a few acres of these lands. Approximately 25,000 to 30,000 acres of wastelands were reclaimed between 1700 and 1860.⁸⁰ The cultivated areas tended to be mainly small holdings, particularly in the mining districts in the west. The relatively undersized patches of fertile ground were usually shared out in an intricate mixture of large and small fields, with a wide dispersal of estates, often with landholdings spreading across many parishes.⁸¹ This explains the pockets of green fields, and gentry's seats that the travellers frequently came across. The diminutive size of many Cornish estates was mainly due to a considerable number of landowners having other sources of income such as mining.⁸²

A pocket of arable farming occurred around Lostwithiel. Swete in 1780, found the countryside to be "mostly enclosed, rich and finely diversified with moor, pasture, arable ground and trees".⁸³ Another pocket of cultivation was between St. Austell and Truro. Forbes in 1794, considered the surface, "though tolerably well cultivated, being in general divested of trees, made a cold and dreary appearance".⁸⁴ However Warner decided, as he approached Truro that it was "a striking contrast to the general character of Cornwall" of a more improved look, "a more careful cultivation, and a few gentlemen's mansions".⁸⁵ Cornwall had long since been divested of much of its woodland for use in the tin smelters. The travellers would have been comparing what they saw with Devon's beautiful, very fertile countryside amid hills well covered with woods. For example Ayton had not advanced far into

⁷⁸ White, *op. Cit.*, p. 275.

⁷⁹ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁸⁰ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

⁸¹ Jaggard, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁸² Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁸³ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁸⁴ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁸⁵ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

north Devon from Cornwall when he noticed a great improvement in the face of the country, particularly in an abundance of trees.⁸⁶ White had already seen hills cultivated to the summit plus wooded hills, ivy and creepers on his walk from Totnes to Dartmouth in Devon.⁸⁷ However, improvements had been made by the time White walked the road to Truro in 1854, it was "through a pleasant undulating valley well sprinkled with trees".⁸⁸

On the approach toward Penryn and Falmouth, Forbes in 1794, thought that, although the hills were heathy and barren, they were more cultivated than he had expected. In the most sheltered valleys there were still a few woods.⁸⁹ Sixty years later, White says that in and around the many arms of Falmouth harbour "here and there a few pleasant snatches of scenery remain, where the hill-sides have been left un-mutilated".⁹⁰ He was speaking of the mutilation caused by the numerous excavations in the search for metal. White also describes a scene at Perran Wharf that demonstrated the jumble of nature contending with the Cornish preoccupation with mining, and its associated industries.

Perran Wharf, and its noisy foundry, occupy the bottom of a shady hollow, which might be taken for a broad glade in a forest. You will perhaps be as much surprised to find that industry need not always be associated with ugliness, as by the beauty of the place itself. Piles of manufactured iron lie about, and heaps of coal and refuse, and vessels are loading and unloading at the wharf, but the scene is romantic, and the woods of Carclew, Sir Charles Lemon's domain, come sweeping down in masses of foliage that triumph over smoke, and all the roar of bellows and furnaces!⁹¹

Unfortunately, some farmers tended to neglect the expansion of their cultivated lands due to the promise of wealth from mining, particularly when copper mining became very prosperous. Therefore the existing farms were no longer able to supply all the needs of the growing population, where once the eastern farming districts more than adequately met those needs. The greatest population growth was in the western mining districts. In 1750 Cornwall's population was 140,000; in 1800 it was

⁸⁶ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁸⁷ White, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁸⁹ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

⁹⁰ White, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

192,000 and in 1841 it was 342,000.⁹² Toward the end of the eighteenth century the food riots by a hungry mining community marked the beginning of the economic recession when the farmers were enticed to ship grain out of the country in order to benefit from higher prices.⁹³ Once again Cornwall's economy was seen to suffer due to the county's overspecialisation in mining.

Within the context of inland space, the towns also have been divided into their functions of mining towns and agricultural towns, whilst fishing villages and ports for import and export are the divisions within coastal space. Comparisons are made between the earlier and later travellers' comments to determine if the towns and villages have grown. It will be seen that although there was growth of towns in the mining regions, urbanisation in Cornwall had not occurred to the same extent it had in the north.

Urban space in the north during the Industrial Revolution grew enormously due to massive movement of people to the towns. Mass immigration from outside Cornwall was not experienced like it was in the northern midlands and Wales where influxes from Ireland and other parts of England were experienced. Migration during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was largely an internal phenomenon. It involved in the early part of the nineteenth century a small but discernible movement of population from the more easterly agricultural districts to the copper mining districts in the west. For example Redruth's population rose from 4,924 to 11,504 between 1801 and 1861.⁹⁴ This movement was sufficient to satisfy the demand for labour in this area. Later in the nineteenth century, with the opening of the new copper fields in the east such as St. Austell, and the clay works in this area, movement was reversed, with miners moving from the declining western mining districts. Payton describes this migration as the "first hints of the process of de-industrialisation that was to characterise Cornwall, and a precursor of the imminent mass 'Great Migration'".⁹⁵ 'The Great Migration' is a term popularly used

⁹² Jaggard, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

when speaking of the emigration of Cornish miners, which took place from the 1860s when copper and tin declined. Therefore this was not so evident when the travellers in this study visited Cornwall.

Collins had already commented above on the increase of the population of towns in the mining districts, such as Redruth and Camborne. The following observations indicate Redruth's growth between Fiennes' visit in 1698 and Redding's in 1842. It was considered to be a market town by Fiennes.⁹⁶ And twenty years later Defoe thought Redruth to be of "no consideration".⁹⁷ In 1750, Pococke saw that the town held a great market for provisions once a week where four to five thousand people attended.⁹⁸ This suggests the extent of the population the mines supported in the surrounding area. By the time Warner visited Redruth in 1808, it had become "a town, if not of surpassing beauty, at least of intercourse, activity, and population".⁹⁹ Redruth's population in 1811 was 5903.¹⁰⁰ Warner explained that because it was situated in the heart of the mining country it was considerably enriched by the mining concerns with conveniences and comforts flowing from the retail trade.¹⁰¹ Redding wrote that Redruth had increased six fold in the last eighty years. He said it was the most important town in the mining districts "standing in the midst of a bleak and irregular district, the earth turned inside out by ancient and modern workings for tin and copper".¹⁰² Redruth had grown to 11,504 in 1861.¹⁰³ When compared to the growth in the northern industrial regions it becomes evident how insignificant this growth was. Birmingham grew from 25,000 in 1740 to 73,000 in 1801, Leeds 17,000 in 1775 to 53,000 in 1801, and Liverpool 5000 in 1700 to 77,653 in 1801.¹⁰⁴

Truro and St. Austell were comparable mining towns to Redruth because of their central positions and importance to the mining districts. From Fiennes visit in 1698,

⁹⁶ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

⁹⁷ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

⁹⁸ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁹⁹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹⁰⁰ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁰¹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹⁰² Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

¹⁰³ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

¹⁰⁴ W. T. Selley, *England in the eighteenth century*, (London, 1964), p. 247.

when she thought Truro had a good quay and used to be a good trading town, but had become "disregarded", it grew to become the county capital.¹⁰⁵ It was situated at the "northern extremity" of Falmouth harbour and could admit up to one hundred ton ships at the time of Forbes' visit in 1794.¹⁰⁶ He called it a "neat" town, the "best streets wide and airy with good houses and well furnished shops, all paved in the modern style, their names at the corners, and the lamps at convenient distances. Everything seems improving and nothing going to decay."¹⁰⁷ At this time Truro was a borough and coinage town, the Stannary Parliament having been held here, and its chief trade was in shipping tin and copper ore. It was known to be a stylish town, "the people of this town dress and live so elegantly, that the pride of Truro is one of the bye-words of this county; and the quarter-sessions ... being generally held here, it is pretty well stocked with attorneys."¹⁰⁸ Warner was also most impressed with Truro, he thought it may be "denominated the metropolis of Cornwall". Warner went on to say, "Here all the modes of polished life are visible, in genteel houses, elegant hospitality, fashionable apparel, and courteous manners."¹⁰⁹ In 1842, Redding announced it to be "one of our finest country towns of its size, its population and buildings are on the increase." He estimated the population to be about 10,000 at the time.¹¹⁰ *Kelly's Directory 1856*, states that the population in 1851 was 10,733.¹¹¹ This figure seems somewhat diminished when compared with the growth of Manchester in the north from a population of 8000 in 1700 to 95,000 in 1801, to 365,000 by 1850.¹¹² *The Directory* of 1856 attributed Truro's growth to its situation on an arm of the Falmouth harbour and its central position in the mining district, with three main roads running to St. Austell, Bodmin and Redruth.¹¹³ Its trade continued to consist of exporting tin and copper, and it also imported coal, and timber from Norway. White commented on this when he saw "Norwegian ships

¹⁰⁵ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁰⁶ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁰⁷ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

¹⁰⁸ *Universal British Directory*, 1793-1798, p. 217.

¹⁰⁹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹¹⁰ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

¹¹¹ *Kelly's Directory*, 1856, p. 144.

¹¹² Selley, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

¹¹³ *Kelly's Directory*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

discharge their cargoes of timber, for use in the mines; the demand being incessant".¹¹⁴

St. Austell's growth came a little later than that of Truro and Redruth, due to the local migration to the new china clay works and copper mines opening up in the area. In 1698 St. Austell "was a little market town" according to Fiennes.¹¹⁵ "The modern town" Daniell in 1823 said, "dates its growth from the establishment of the turnpike-road through it, about fifty years ago, and is the principal thoroughfare for travellers from Plymouth to the Land's End".¹¹⁶ And by 1842, Redding's impression was that it was "a poor town, but the parish is populous".¹¹⁷ Redding travelled during the 'hungry forties', a time of poor harvests, high prices and low wages, which would have accounted for St. Austell's appearance of poverty.¹¹⁸ St. Austell was the first Cornish town White, in 1854, saw any "noticeable indications of life and business".¹¹⁹ He accounted for this by suggesting it was the capital of a busy district and was close to the port where mineral produce was shipped in large quantities. White also saw carts loaded with cubes of chalk pass him by repeatedly, excavated from the china clay works north of St. Austell "extending far into the dreary district" toward St. Columb.¹²⁰

However, despite the growth and obvious prosperity of these towns, they were not large urban centres attracting labour to work in large factories, as they did in the midlands. They were mainly populated by merchants and trades-people. The miners tended to live adjacent to the mines they were working in. An example of the urbanisation experienced in the north was Sheffield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Defoe visited Sheffield in 1724. He said it was "very populous and large".¹²¹ He commented that the hands employed in the manufacture of hardware in Sheffield mainly lived out on the boundary of the town. About sixty years later in

¹¹⁴ White, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

¹¹⁵ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

¹¹⁶ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

¹¹⁷ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

¹¹⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹¹⁹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

¹²¹ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

1785, the La Rochfoucauld brothers saw much building going on. They saw many factories standing beside the Loxley and Rivelin rivers. "It is their water and the abundance of coal mined close to the town that the town owes the great abundance of factories of every kind gathered here".¹²² The water and the coal were two key factors that contributed to Cornwall's inability to compete with the progressive, diverse industrialisation in the north. The brothers saw silk and cotton mills, factories making buttons, plate, and steel. They estimated the population at forty thousand, all employed in manufactures and trade.¹²³ The town had grown enormously since Defoe's visit, and at an astonishing rate compared to the Cornish industrial towns. In 1830, William Cobbett described the view of Sheffield by night and the "iron furnaces in all the horrible splendour of their everlasting blaze".¹²⁴ The hills all round the town were "bespangled with groups of houses inhabited by the working cutlers".¹²⁵ Sheffield was a good example of the massive urbanisation going on in the northern counties during this industrial age. It had grown from 20,000 in 1760 to 45,000 in 1801, which is a big increase when compared to Cornwall's largest towns in 1851 (50 years later) with a population of 10,733 in Truro, and 11,504 in Redruth.¹²⁶

Cornwall's four major agricultural towns analysed here are Liskeard, Lostwithiel, Bodmin and Launceston, which were all at one time parliamentary boroughs situated in east Cornwall. Liskeard and Lostwithiel were two of the five Stannary towns where, as explained by Defoe in 1724, the blocks of tin from the tin mines were brought to the coinage, a system of heavy taxes paid to the Duchy of Cornwall on the "tinnerns" product in return for rights of legislation and jurisdiction over the management of their industry.¹²⁷ Both Liskeard and Lostwithiel, although agricultural towns, probably owed their survival to their coinage privileges. Liskeard was larger than Lostwithiel, Defoe describing it as well built, with a "very great market" and "people of fashion".¹²⁸ Whereas Defoe described Lostwithiel as

¹²² Scarfe, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹²⁴ William Cobbett, *Rural rides*, (London, 1973), p. 217.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹²⁶ Selley, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

¹²⁷ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

¹²⁸ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

"an ancient, and once flourishing, but now a decayed town, and as to trade and navigation quite destitute, which is occasioned by the river being filled up with sands" where once the river Fowey, "was formerly navigable by ships of good burden."¹²⁹ Forbes in 1794 noted Liskeard contained a few genteel houses although "the situation is very hilly, ... dirty and badly paved".¹³⁰ Redding found the streets to be irregular but clean and well built.¹³¹ And Collins eight years later thought Liskeard was an "abomination of desolation, a large agricultural country town. Modern square houses, barren of all outer ornament; wide, dusty, deserted streets."¹³² These varying comments were probably more of a reflection of the visitors' first impression of a functional Cornish agricultural town, which did not fit the mythical image of West Barbary or that of a mining town. Lostwithiel's growth stalled when it was disfranchised as a parliamentary borough in 1832, but beforehand it had been a coinage town since medieval times, and had held the last Stannary Parliament meeting in 1750.¹³³

Further inland on the western edge of the moor lay Bodmin. Pococke in 1750 thought it appeared to be a poor town.¹³⁴ Swete called it an "inelegant town" and Forbes in 1794 also thought it looked "shabby".¹³⁵ However, it had changed by the time Redding visited it in 1842. It was a corporate town with an excellent market. He maintained that it had "very much improved" since the assizes and county sessions had been moved there from Launceston. New granite buildings had "arisen in every direction".¹³⁶ Bodmin's growth was assured, as it was where both borough and county elections were held, and it was on the main highway from Devon.

The Assizes were held in Launceston, near the Devon border, at the time of Celia Fiennes' visit in 1698; the town had old timber houses, with "two or three good

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

¹³⁰ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

¹³¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

¹³² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹³³ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹³⁴ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

¹³⁵ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 194, Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

¹³⁶ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

houses built after the London form by some lawyers".¹³⁷ Defoe in 1724 only saw an "antiquated" town, "an old, ragged, decayed place, in general".¹³⁸ Swete in 1780 thought it was "far from being a handsome town consisting of several rather mean built streets".¹³⁹ Improvements were being made by the time Redding visited in 1842. "The streets are narrow, but improvements are begun", they were rebuilding the market hall, new houses were being built everywhere, and the roads were "kept in the best order". *The Directory* in 1856 confirmed that the appearance of the town had been much improved lately, by the demolition of the old guildhall and the erection of a corn market on its site.¹⁴⁰ Redding understood that Launceston mainly relied on "graceful cultivation and busy industry" for its prosperity.¹⁴¹ *The Directory* in 1856, stated that the trade of Launceston was principally confined to agricultural produce but "presents a most respectable and business-like appearance," as it was a parliamentary borough and it held the county court and petty sessions once a month. Its population was much smaller than Redruth and Truro, with only 2,591 in 1851.¹⁴² However its survival was due mainly to its non-association with mining relying on its agricultural wealth, and its position as a parliamentary borough.

These inland towns also had a few small industries, which some of the travellers noted. Forbes in 1794 said in Liskeard "the woollen manufactory ... employs the poor of all ages and sexes".¹⁴³ He also spoke of woollen factories in Helston and Launceston, which made a coarser kind of cloth, which employed the local inhabitants.¹⁴⁴ Redding saw a "small worsted manufactory" in St. Austell.¹⁴⁵ There was also a small factory in carpets at Truro.¹⁴⁶ Wool prices fell disastrously after 1815, putting the textile industries of western England into a perilous state. By then the cotton industry in the northern counties was becoming a threat to the woollen

¹³⁷ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

¹³⁸ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

¹³⁹ Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

¹⁴⁰ Kelly's *Directory*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁴¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹⁴² Kelly's *Directory*, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁴³ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁴⁵ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

¹⁴⁶ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

industry, proving popular with both domestic and overseas markets.¹⁴⁷ However woollen manufactories in Cornwall had introduced a variety of looms along with their new breeds of sheep to make different cloths to meet changing market demands. Therefore woollen sales were able to recover for a time.¹⁴⁸

The travellers found the agricultural towns mentioned above were similar to their counterparts in Devon. Like Cornwall, Devon had few large towns, with the exception of Plymouth and Exeter, which were substantially larger than Truro and Redruth. Devon was concerned with old established industries, such as the manufacture of woollens, fishing, tanning, quarrying, and shipbuilding. The travellers saw, therefore, many towns in Devon involved in these trades. For example the towns of Tiverton and Okehampton were employed in making serges that were dyed at Exeter, according to Pococke.¹⁴⁹ Defoe stated that in Tiverton most people were fully employed with very few out of work.¹⁵⁰ A difference is found in Exeter, as an example of a prosperous town in Devon, when compared to Cornwall's major towns. Exeter was, and still is today, a cathedral city on the main thoroughfare to Plymouth. At the time of Fiennes and Defoes' visits at the turn of the seventeenth century, it was one of the larger cities in England with a population of 12,000 people.¹⁵¹ This was far larger than Redruth, which only had a population of 4,924 one hundred years later in 1801. Nevertheless, Exeter did not grow at the same rate as the mining towns in Cornwall over the same period of time due to the woollen trade's competition within the textile industry. Devon's towns differed in that they were not sustained by wealthy mining families as many of the towns were in Cornwall. They relied on mainly woollen factories and agriculture with some quarrying. As discussed earlier, wool was subject to massive competition by the cotton works in northern England. From the 1840s many small country towns in Devon began to decline over a long period of time. This trend was attributed to

¹⁴⁷ A. J. Holland, *The age of Industrial expansion*, (London, 1969), p.43.

¹⁴⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

¹⁴⁹ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

¹⁵⁰ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

¹⁵¹ Holland, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

remoteness, poor communication, lack of amenities, limited opportunities for employment, and poor housing.¹⁵²

Cornwall's coastal space had more in common with Devon than her inland space. Devon's coastal towns and villages were more prosperous however, by pre-empting Cornwall in attracting tourists and visitors for their health due to the earlier railway connections to the rest of England. The division of Cornwall's coastal space into fishing villages, and trading ports is not conclusive, as many ports were also involved in the fishing industry and many fishing villages were involved in shipping. However a demarcation will be proposed as to their major trade and size.

Most of Cornwall's ports were on the southern coast due to unsheltered and relatively unsafe anchorages along the northern coast. The broader, protected and more welcoming waters of Cornwall's Fal and Fowey estuaries, winding and deeply wooded in their upper reaches, provided safer havens than the short rivers and shifting sands of the Hayle and Camel estuaries on the northern coast of Cornwall. However a few harbours had been built on the northern coast to enable easier access to the Welsh coal, so important for the mining industry, and the export of Cornwall's ore, which was smelted mainly also in Wales. And in between these major estuaries were deeply indented shores, secluded coves and precipitous headlands.

Along the southern coast the travellers came across plunging valleys and steep cliffs. Celia Fiennes in 1698 was astounded by the very steep descent and ascent in and out of Looe, three times steeper than she had come across before.¹⁵³ Warner had to dismount and lead his horses in some parts of the narrow, steep lane of about seven miles, which he said was a precipitous zig-zag of a track with an abrupt descent of about 100ft in depth.¹⁵⁴ Over time many of these steep tracks leading into these isolated villages were improved. As Redding stated, a new road into Looe had been built making the town more accessible by land.¹⁵⁵ Many of these fishing villages in

¹⁵² A. Shorter, W. Ravenhill, K. Gregory, *Southwest England*, (London, 1969), p. 191.

¹⁵³ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

¹⁵⁴ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁵⁵ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

earlier centuries only needed to be accessed from the sea. It was due to the export of tin and copper, and the import of the necessary coals and timber that improvements on the inland routes to the mines were made from some of the ports.

Coastal space descriptions by the travellers were mainly preoccupied with the fishing ports and villages. And this is where change was more readily detected. Some ports such as Hayle and Penzance grew whilst others such as Looe and Marazion remained much the same as they had been in earlier centuries. Each traveller's interpretation of coastal space was shaped by their preconceived notions of what filled that space, influenced by traditions represented in its people and culture, and satisfying the West Barbary ideal. Daphne du Maurier highlights this

If a Cornishman was not streaming for tin, mining it underground or in some way getting his living from the soil, the odds were that his home was in one of the numerous small villages clustering by the sea's edge and that, like his ancestors before him, he gained his livelihood by fishing.¹⁵⁶

Therefore the fishing villages are firstly evaluated, as the travellers satisfied their preconceptions of Cornish coastal living where the major business was in fishing. The fishing village of Looe was a sample of many of the fishing villages and ports clinging to the cliffs around the Cornish coast visited by the travellers. Fiennes in 1698 described it as "a pretty big seaport, a great many little houses all of stone".¹⁵⁷ In 1724, Defoe saw West and East Looe as both good trading towns in merchandise and fish¹⁵⁸. However, over 100 years later Warner in 1808 described a completely different picture. He said it was "a small miserable town, and despoiled of its trade by war, exhibits little else at present than poverty and discontent".¹⁵⁹ Looe relied on its trade in pilchards to Europe, which came to a standstill because of the Napoleonic war. Fowey, the next main port west, had a similar story to tell. It was an ancient town, according to Defoe in 1724, with "many flourishing merchants in it, who have a great share in the fishing trade, especially in pilchards".¹⁶⁰ It also did not seem to be doing very well in 1808 when Warner visited it, as he talked about the decay of

¹⁵⁶ Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, (London, 1972), p. 167.

¹⁵⁷ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

¹⁵⁸ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

¹⁵⁹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

¹⁶⁰ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

commerce from the continuance of the war, and the "shutting up of the Mediterranean ports" was the general cry he heard from the inhabitants.¹⁶¹

Things had improved in Looe by the time of Collins' visit in 1850. "One of the prettiest and most primitive places in England. ... The houses of the town straggling out towards the sea along each bank of the river, in mazes of little streets; curious old quays project over the water at different points; coast-trade vessels are being loaded and unloaded, ... hills, harbour, and houses thus quaintly combined together. ... No such thing as a straight street in the place".¹⁶² Similarly Warner in 1808 described St. Ives as "large but irregular; intersected by narrow streets which run in the most intricate and capricious directions".¹⁶³ Likewise Redding's description in 1842 of Falmouth included "a narrow ill-built street running parallel with the harbour, which may now and then be seen close by at the end of some narrow opening among the houses or down a low and dingy passage".¹⁶⁴

White described Looe as "romantic and striking to the stranger", as "gardens and cottages line the hill-sides, filled with shrubs, flower, and fruit trees; literally 'hanging gardens'". The flowers, White said, generally grew in more southern European climates, and were well suited to this protected port, "warmed by the southern sun".¹⁶⁵ This gave White the feeling that the town had a "foreign aspect" which he said you would sense in many towns in Cornwall¹⁶⁶. This comment again highlights Cornwall's 'difference', and confirms the traveller's impression that he or she was in another country.

However these images were also very similar to the southern coast in Devon. For example Dartmouth, described by White in 1854, consisted of "houses built one above another on the hill-side".¹⁶⁷ And White also likened Brixham to France, as he

¹⁶¹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

¹⁶² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁶³ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

¹⁶⁴ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

¹⁶⁵ White, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ White, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

said it was like “queer old places on the opposite channel”.¹⁶⁸ Like Cornwall, the mild climate enabled plants to be grown in Dawlish, which according to White would have needed to be kept in a conservatory in the Midlands.¹⁶⁹ Daniell in 1823 was bemused at the fashionable idea in the 1800s to compare the south Devon coast with Italy. He thought this comparison “far fetched and fanciful”. He considered it a better idea to attract visitors by recommending the coast as beneficial for their health, and they would surely have chosen Devon instead of Tuscany.¹⁷⁰ The southeast Devon coast was a little ahead of Cornwall in attracting visitors, and many ultimately did go for their health. Many of the villages such as Teignmouth, and Torquay, had bathing machines and hot baths, hotels, public libraries and reading rooms. White walked the Devon coastal path in 1854 when they were in the process of building a railway, which Mills was able to make use of in 1863, when this area was well established as a seaside tourist attraction.

However not until the 1870s, well after the railways were built, did visiting Cornwall for one’s health become very fashionable.¹⁷¹ The increased frequency of tourists visiting the coastal villages coincided with the demise of the pilchard fishing in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Hence the earlier travellers witnessed bustling fishing harbours and the later travellers, such as White and Mills, experienced the beginning of what was to become a flourishing holiday trade. Cornwall had commenced its new course into the tourism industry to compensate for the loss of its mining and fishing industries.

Penzance in west Cornwall was an example of a very popular place for holidaymakers. Health visits to Penzance had occurred for a wealthy few earlier in the century. Redding visited the chapel yard in Penzance in 1842 and was “struck with the number of tombstones of those who were not recorded as inhabitants of the town”.¹⁷² Many of them were of people sent to Penzance to benefit from the “salubrious climate” in that part of England, when medical attendance had not

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

¹⁷⁰ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁷¹ Rowe, *op. cit.*, 303.

¹⁷² Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

worked. Many of them were sent to die.¹⁷³ Daniell in 1823 had recommended the mild temperature as good for health complaints.¹⁷⁴

Penzance had become very popular when Thomas Mills arrived by train from Hayle in 1863. It had "bright, clean-looking houses, mansion-like hotels, the splendid promenade ... throngs of gaily dressed church bound personages, the distant sight of many a white glistening sail".¹⁷⁵ With the help of the new railway services, the last link to Paddington completed in 1859, more tourists were visiting Penzance for the climate and their health. This explained the evident growth of the hotels, and the following description by Mills that painted a tranquil holiday picture.

The spacious walk was thronged with young ladies, in expansive crinoline, and with book or crochet-work in hand; young men, bearing a spy glass under their arms ... adorned every seat, and, in fact, the whole length of the promenade seemed a complication of gay-coloured bonnets, spy-glasses, fascinating hats, dainty boots, short-tailed coats, Crimean beards, Dundreary whiskers, envious veils, bright sunshine, white, hot sand, bathing machines, boats, stately ships, and blue water in the distance.¹⁷⁶

The earlier visitors to many of the fishing villages were repelled by the reek of the pilchard cellars, and it was not until later in the nineteenth century that they became entranced by the quaint little villages. After visiting a curing house in Portwrinkle, Daniell would have agreed. He believed that the villagers must "acquire an insensibility [or] indifference to certain attendant odours, which to a stranger are insupportable".¹⁷⁷ Ayton also described the dunghills outside each door in the fishing village of Port Isaac, composed chiefly of fish remains from the previous six months, with pigs ineffectively engaged in removing the matter.¹⁷⁸

As well as their existing fishing trade, the ports were kept busy by the nearby mines shipping out copper and tin, and unloading coal and timber for use in the steam engines and the mines. Everything was transported by sea until the railroad crossed the Devon border in 1859. Meanwhile a network of tramways and railroads were

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas H. Mills, *A week's wanderings in Cornwall and Devon*, (London, 1863), p.62.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹⁷⁷ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁸ Ayton, *op. cit.*, vol I, p. 29.

constructed from 1809 to link the mines with ports and quays. New ports were also established such as Hayle, and long established harbours such as Fowey and Looe were equipped to export and import.¹⁷⁹ Much coastal space had become filled with ships and busy wharves carting supplies and unloading vessels during Cornwall's industrial age.

Penzance and St Ives became busy towns in the last quarter of the eighteenth century because of their large, relatively safe bays, which enabled their ports to facilitate the ore, coal and timber shipping. Penzance was situated in the middle of Mounts Bay where pilchard fishing was a major industry, supported by the other fishing villages of Mousehole, Newlyn and Marazion. Penzance was a sample of Cornwall's early industrialisation and its corresponding benefits; a place of good business and trade, well built and populous, and with many ships at anchor, which surprised Defoe in 1724 because he thought it was so remote.¹⁸⁰ This activity was because it had a deep harbour, which allowed it to load and unload good-sized vessels. It was also sheltered from the Atlantic westerlies.¹⁸¹ Here Forbes in 1794, and Warner in 1808, stated that it also exported tin, as it was a coinage town, with many mines in the hinterland. As well it exported pilchards, herring and fish oil to the Mediterranean, and imported timber, planks, iron, and hemp from Russia and Norway for use in the mineshafts.¹⁸² Forbes claims that "many persons at Penzance have within these last fifty years acquired fortunes from twenty to sixty thousand pounds, and during that period the town has been much improved; and all its good houses, as well as many pleasant seats in its vicinity, have been erected".¹⁸³ White arrived in 1854 and found "signs of growth and fertility".¹⁸⁴ White noticed a very successfully cultivated belt of land around Penzance producing vegetables much requested by the London Market.¹⁸⁵ Penzance had been fairly self-sufficient for some time, as Fiennes had noticed tracts of fertile land growing corn, wheat, oats and some rye back in 1698.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

¹⁸⁰ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 175, Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

¹⁸³ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁸⁴ White, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

The obvious benefit was that it was passed on to the local population, which Daniell had noticed in 1823, with its cheapness of living, and “excellent quality of provisions”.¹⁸⁷

On the northern coast was St. Ives, where the herring fishing was busy in October driving up the Bristol Channel as far as Barnstaple in Devon.¹⁸⁸ Pococke in 1750 reported that the pilchards caught at Penzance and St. Ives were barrelled and sent to Spain and Portugal.¹⁸⁹ In 1808 St. Ives also imported coal from Wales, salt from Liverpool, wares from Bristol, and exported pilchards, which apparently were not running in that year according to Warner.¹⁹⁰ Redding believed it owed its prosperity to it being a “populous fishing place, with two or three mines in the vicinity [and] pilchard fishing ...is extensively followed here”.¹⁹¹

Falmouth and Fowey on the south coast were the largest harbours in Cornwall. Falmouth dominated the export trade in pilchards, however this was mainly due to its many trading contacts with the Mediterranean as there was little fishing in the harbour itself.¹⁹² Daniell in 1823 had mentioned this when he spoke of Dartmouth and Kingswear in Devon as being second to Falmouth in the pilchard fisheries employing upwards of 3000.¹⁹³ Falmouth’s prosperity was also due to its proximity to the western mining fields. The harbour itself was extremely busy with Truro and Penryn also situated within its domain. Defoe in 1724, Swete in 1780, and James Forbes in 1794 described Falmouth as the “richest and best trading town in the county”, full of rich merchants.¹⁹⁴ Warner in 1808 thought that it could possibly be the best in the whole country. He said that although it was “a place of great population, wealth, and respectability [it] deserves a much larger portion of the attention and encouragement of the government than it has been honoured with” due

¹⁸⁷ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁸⁸ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁸⁹ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

¹⁹⁰ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

¹⁹¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁹² Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

¹⁹³ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹⁹⁴ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 231, Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 213, Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

to its magnificent harbour.¹⁹⁵ White in 1854 noticed the trading activity was very busy, especially around the shops, warehouses and Custom House, the wharfs and harbour “thronged with vessels”.¹⁹⁶ Falmouth exported salt pilchards, tin and corn, and imported timber and iron coals for the tin works.

One of the trades that Falmouth had sole dominance over was as the station for sending postal packets to Portugal and the West Indies. In 1750, Pococke said that “this has occasioned a counterband (sic) commerce between this place and those ports, which of late has been much interrupted by the searches of the custom house officer; for it is not permitted that these boats should trade”.¹⁹⁷ Many years were needed to cure Falmouth of its contraband practices, explained Walter White over one hundred years later in 1854, because at one time “the revenue officers were always in collusion with the contrabandists on one side, and the traders on the other”.¹⁹⁸ However by the time of White’s visit, the mail packet service had been superseded by steam-vessels; “and not till Falmouth is linked to London by a railway and electric telegraph will she regain her prominence in the postal service”.¹⁹⁹

Although Cornwall had been the first county to enter the ‘Industrial Revolution’ with its steam engines and mining innovations, there had been no progress in transportation and communication links with the rest of Britain. At the time of White, Mills and Collins’ visits in the 1850s, Cornwall was still relatively isolated. White thought, when he saw the Falmouth mail coach trot past, “even in Cornwall it will soon disappear, for the new railway stretches to within a few miles of the Land’s End”.²⁰⁰ The railway was finally connected in 1859. The irony of Cornwall’s industrialisation, which was stimulated because of her isolation and independence, was that this very isolation was one of the causes of her demise.

¹⁹⁵ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

¹⁹⁶ White, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁷ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

¹⁹⁸ White, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

On an arm of the Falmouth harbour lies the former parliamentary borough of Penryn. Boswell found Penryn town and harbour to be animating, although the streets were very narrow. He said it was mainly built of stone and had a population of about 2000 in 1792.²⁰¹ Redding also agreed it was well positioned, although it was a "town of no pretensions in buildings or trade, but very beautifully situated".²⁰² Pilchards and Newfoundland fishing were the chief commerce in Penryn in 1724.²⁰³ Penryn exported moorstone and Cornish granite, which was mainly bought by the government to use in the dockyards, according to Warner in 1808.²⁰⁴ In 1842 Redding quotes the combined population of both Penryn and Falmouth at 11,805, showing that the area must have grown substantially since Boswell's visit, mainly due to the nearby mines and its position on the Falmouth harbour.²⁰⁵

Fowey, although a deep harbour was not as large as Falmouth, and its trade was substantially less. Fowey was an example of a declining town relying on the fluctuating pilchard trade, losing out to Par as the main port for the mines in that area, and unable to compete with the three major towns of Truro, Penryn and Falmouth trading in Falmouth harbour. Yet when White visited it in 1854 he did not think the large deep harbour was used to its full potential. "Said to be the best in the Kingdom, is a noble expanse of water, navigable at all times of the tide: yet, judging from appearances, the trade is nothing like commensurate with the natural advantages".²⁰⁶ White also spoke of its famous past saying that it was once a great harbour, giving 47 ships and 770 mariners to Edward IV's Calais Fleet, more than any other port at the time except Yarmouth. He points out how then Liverpool was "a mere fishing village—and now!"²⁰⁷

White's comment about Fowey and Liverpool illustrates Cornwall's economic stagnation in the mid nineteenth century compared to the north's acceleration. Ayton was impressed with Liverpool's size when he visited in 1814. The docks and

²⁰¹ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²⁰² Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

²⁰³ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

²⁰⁴ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

²⁰⁵ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

²⁰⁶ White, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

"various basins cover thirty-five statute acres of ground, and the whole of this space is generally completely filled up by vessels ... surrounded by shops and warehouses, and all the bustle and confusion of the very busiest part of the town."²⁰⁸ He states that there is a vast range of immense warehouses an imposing nine stories high along the quays. Liverpool, he concluded, "brought before our minds the country in the pride of its industry and enterprise, and under the most striking signs of its wealth, consequence, and power."²⁰⁹ As mentioned earlier, Liverpool had a population of 77,653 in 1801 and was to nearly double by 1851, a massive growth compared to Fowey.²¹⁰ This was because Liverpool had the ability to diversify.

On the northern coast the main ports were Hayle and Padstow. Hayle is on St. Ives Bay. At the time both Fiennes, in 1698, and Pococke, in 1750, visited Hayle it was a "small port with warehouses".²¹¹ It did not grow substantially until after a copper smelting works began operation in 1754, and later a foundry for manufacturing engines was established.²¹² Ayton spoke of the copper works, steam engines and furnaces surrounded by barren sands.²¹³ Mills arrived in Hayle by steamer from Bristol. He was obviously not impressed when he made a remark that the name was misspelt, "it should be Hole!" He said there was "coal, tramways, dirt, viaducts. Streets do not seem to exist, but the dingy, square-shaped houses, ... and prison-like manufactories".²¹⁴ Although by the time Mills and White visited Hayle the copper works had closed down, as Cornwall found it cheaper to send the ore to be smelted at Swansea, than to fetch coal for the process from Wales, however the town was still very busy with its port, railway and foundries.²¹⁵

Padstow was the first "town of any note" according to Defoe in 1724, and Pococke in 1750, being a large town with a good harbour for a great many ships employed in

²⁰⁸ Richard Ayton & William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813*, Vol II, (London, 1978), p. 81.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ Selley, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

²¹¹ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

²¹² Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

²¹³ Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 15.

²¹⁴ Mills, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

²¹⁵ White, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

trading corn with Ireland.²¹⁶ Warner agreed the harbour was beautiful, exporting fish and importing hemp and timber, making the town wealthy and respectable²¹⁷. Only five years later Ayton arrived at the largest town on the northern coast with high expectations, but was disappointed in Padstow, as, although well sheltered, the harbour suffered from the accumulation of sand, which formed a sand bar that kept out larger vessels. He said they were trying to plant plantations to stabilise the sand, but because of exposure to the sea winds it had not been very successful.²¹⁸ White in 1854 pointed out that there was no safe harbour on the Bristol channel accessible at all times of the tide, but a port “of refuge” was planned for construction at Padstow.²¹⁹

Although the travellers found Cornwall’s ports to be similar to some of Devon’s, there were a few differences. Plymouth had the advantage of being a naval base, which ensured its prosperity and growth. Devon was also fortunate to have safer harbours than Cornwall on the northern coast facilitating trade to Ireland and America. Ilfracombe, for example, had an excellent harbour and good trade and was “populous and rich” according to Defoe, in 1724.²²⁰ Barnstaple and Bideford also had safe shipping and easy channels, with a number of “wealthy merchants” and a market for Irish wool, yarn and serge.²²¹

The travellers have revealed Cornwall’s general lack of diversification with the Cornish ports being supported by either fishing or trading. This overspecialisation in mining and pilchard fishing resulted in some villages and ports declining in the later part of the nineteenth century. The visitors to such ports as Fowey had noticed the beginning of this decline. However some ports survived a little longer than others with the dual purposes of fishing and importing and exporting. If the fishing season was particularly bad in some years, there were still ships to load and unload. However, there were a few villages that were unable to take advantage of nearby

²¹⁶ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 242, Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

²¹⁷ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

²¹⁸ Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p.27.

²¹⁹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

²²⁰ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

mining regions. Away from the activity of the mining industry of Cornwall, along her coastal shores existed a virtually unchanged landscape, as portrayed by the travellers. As Collins headed eastwards along the northern coast and left behind the “fertility and populousness of the great mining districts”, the roads became more deserted, some “dwindle to the merest foot-track. Again you pass through the quaint coast villages, and see the few simple cottages, the few old boats, the little groups talking quietly at the inn door, as they have already presented themselves along the southern and western shores of Cornwall”.²²²

Bossiney was an example of a village located on the north east coast of Cornwall. Ayton in 1813 was appalled at this place, which he called “a miserable village, where poverty and indolence were so intimately combined.”²²³ Redding was also rather scathing of the village which was “a very poor and miserable place.”²²⁴ Warner, also thought the area exposed, gloomy and dreary, and White announced it “a wild-looking little place”.²²⁵

The travellers’ observations had shown that coastal space had not changed dramatically if compared to coastal space in the northern industrial regions. This was despite Cornwall having always been more accessible by sea than by land, again alluding to Cornwall as island like, and the ports having increased in their trade to supply the mines with the necessary coal and timber required for their expanding operations. But once again growth had stagnated in Cornwall while the north expanded more quickly due to its ability to produce and manufacture finished products from the available raw materials. For example in Liverpool, factories had sprouted up around the port manufacturing a wide range of items, whereas some of the coastal ports in Cornwall did not diversify due to their reliance on the pilchard fisheries, or importing coal for that all important commodity of industrialisation – power. However, many were beginning to change in the 1870s to cater for the

²²² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

²²³ Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 31.

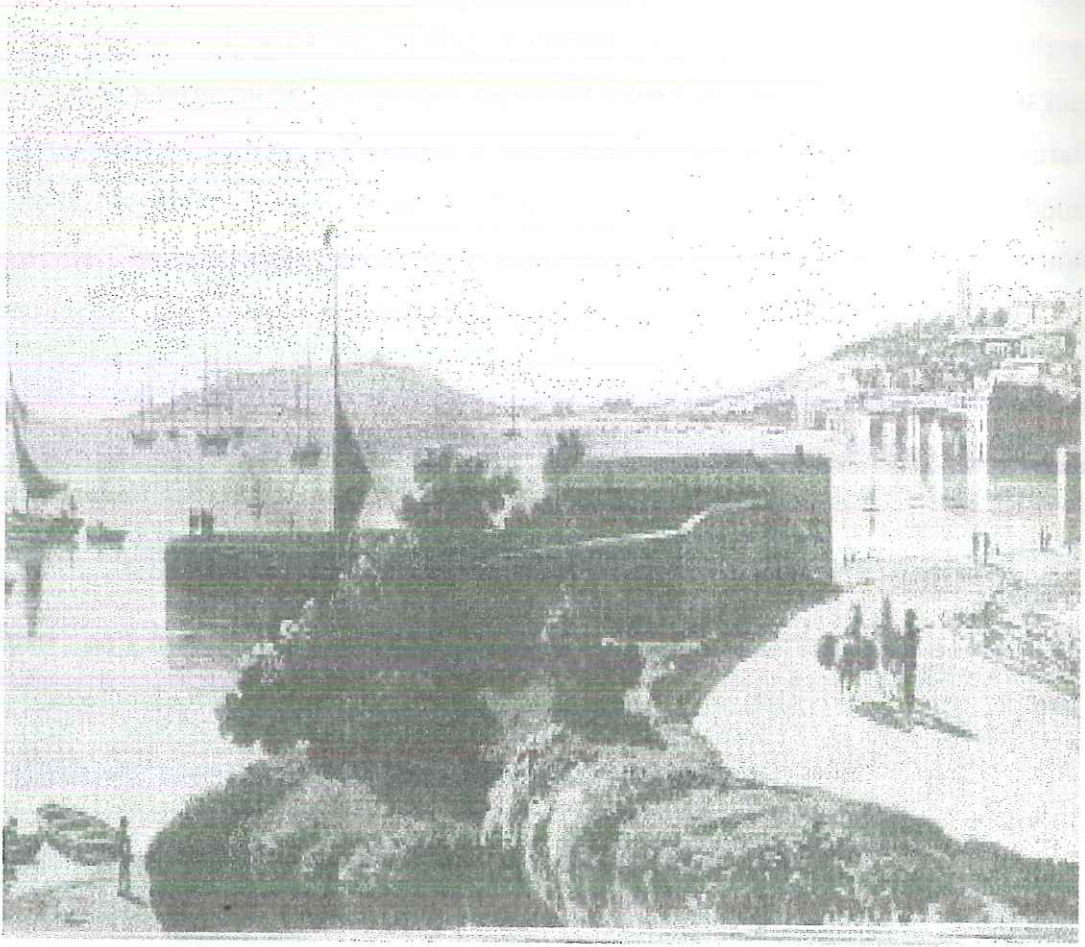
²²⁴ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

²²⁵ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 319, White, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

tourist and visitors for their health, ensuring a place in Cornwall's economy for the future.

In conclusion, the travellers arrived in Cornwall with preconceptions of a mythical space filled with barren wastes and craggy shores interspersed with small fishing villages. By dividing Cornwall's space into inland and coastal space, categorising towns and ports by their function such as mining towns and agricultural towns, fishing ports and trading ports, the travellers' observations indicated initially a prosperous landscape that did not greatly develop or diversify after the eighteenth century, which concealed Cornwall's eventual economic downfall. In their writings, inland space was dominated by mining and the industrial landscape to the detriment of agricultural space. The earlier eighteenth century travellers viewed an industrial scene ahead of its time, with steam pumping machines and pipes and wagons spread across the landscape as far as the eye could see. This was Cornwall's industrial face, hiding the imperfect, incomplete Cornish 'Industrial Revolution' which was perfected in the northern counties with progress and diversification, leaving Cornwall behind to languish with its overspecialised mining industry. The Cornish preoccupation with mining affairs, hostility toward 'foreign' investors, stubborn determination to sustain ailing mines, and an established trading cycle with south Wales, were all contributing factors to the failure to diversify into other mining activities.

Coastal space was represented to show that fishing was also victim to over specialisation in the fickle pilchard, and due to the unreliability of their seasonal run the industry also declined. During the eighteenth century the early travellers were surprised to see prosperous busy mining towns and ports, representing an established industrialised county in operation. However the later travellers began to see signs of hardship with coastal villages either stagnating or changing into holiday centres for tourists. The inland agricultural towns had not prospered very much and were outpaced in growth by the mining towns, but managed to survive due to their agricultural ties. Eventually they saw the mining towns stall in their earlier growth spurt, marking the beginning of Cornwall's de-industrialisation.



Falmouth, Cornwall

Illustration by William Daniell in William Daniell, *A voyage Round Great Britain*, Vol. Viii, (London, 1978,) p.55.

In observing space in Cornwall the travellers revealed a mixed economy; an industrialised county engaged in intensive mining, a commercial fishing industry trading internationally, and an agricultural system experimenting in agrarian improvements. Instead of finding a subsistence rural society the travellers discovered a large number of people depended mainly on the sale of their labour for a livelihood, something considered a new phenomenon in the northern industrial regions, but which had long existed in Cornwall's mining districts. Livings is about how the Cornish people earned their livelihoods in industrial Cornwall, featuring their independent nature and strong Cornish loyalty.

A Cornish poet wrote in the thirteenth century during the reign of King Henry III,

Twere needless to recount their numerous store,
Vast wealth and large Provision for the Poor,
In Fish and Tin they know no rival shore.¹

These two livings had always been considerable in Cornwall. Therefore this chapter will investigate mining (including copper) and fishing first, followed by other livings such as china clay works. Despite agriculture having employed more people than any other industry in Cornwall and having contained the most politically outspoken fraction, it was not often remarked upon by the travellers, other than as observations on the landscape, and with little comment about the farmers and agricultural workers.

About 30,000 people depended on Cornish tin mining in the first half of the eighteenth century, with half the total being wholly dependent on the mines for their livelihood, and the other half also involved in cultivating smallholdings or taking part in the seasonal pilchard fishery.² It was during these times that Fiennes, (although a little earlier in 1698), Defoe, and Pococke visited Cornwall, and described the employment conditions of the miners. When comparing the later visits of Warner, Redding, Collins, and White, it was found that there was little change in

¹ Rev. John Swete, 'Tour in Cornwall in 1780', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 6,3 (1971), p. 207.

² John Rowe, *Cornwall in the age of the Industrial Revolution*, (St. Austell, 1993), p. 28.

working conditions experienced by the miners, only evidence of technological advance within the industry. However the mining population had grown substantially in the nineteenth century with 36,284 copper mine employees alone recorded in the 1851 census out of a population of approximately 345,000, compared to 9196 estimated mine employees in 1787 of a population of approximately 170,000.³ In the 1831 census sixty percent of the mining labour force was employed at mines with more than 250 workers and just over thirty percent were employed in the five largest mines with over 1000 persons.⁴ The above figures reflected the intensity of mining and the influence it had on other livings the travellers noticed on their respective tours through Cornwall. The figures also revealed Cornwall's over specialisation in mining, which ultimately caused its industrial growth to stagnate. This was mainly due to Cornwall not expanding into secondary industries resulting in the workers' inability to diversify into alternative industrial fields.

A mile and a half from St. Austell, Fiennes in 1698, came upon men digging in tin mines, at "least twenty mines all in sight", which employed about 1000 men working "almost night and day" seven days a week to prevent their mines being flooded with water.⁵ These mines were likely to be the Polgooth tin works. Pococke in 1750 said the miners worked six days a week, eight hours a day underground.⁶ Redding showed not much had changed by 1842, when he reported that the men worked eight-hour shifts, in the deepest mines, often taking an hour to reach the surface.⁷ And in 1850, Collins still found the men to be working eight-hour days and rotating night shifts.⁸

In comparison to Fiennes' 1000 workers, James Forbes estimated in 1794, that for St. Austell, the "tin mines and smelting houses in its vicinity employ upwards of 700 men".⁹ Although still a large number of workers, the steam pumps and machinery

³ John Rule, *The labouring classes in early industrial England 1750-1850*, (London, 1987), p. 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Christopher Morris, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685 – 1712*, (London, 1982), p. 205.

⁶ James Joel, Cartwright, *The travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke*, vol II, (London, 1965), p. 112.

⁷ Cyrus Redding, *Illustrated itinerary of the county of Cornwall*, (London, 1843), p. 199.

⁸ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles beyond railways*, (London, 1982), p. 112.

⁹ James Forbes, 'Tour into Cornwall to the Land's End', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 4,2 (1983), p. 168.

starting to be used at the mines during this time would have replaced some of the manual labour used in Fiennes' times. However employment was still growing as an increasing number of mines were being opened. Fiennes thought that at least twenty men and boys per mine shaft were either down in the mines digging and carrying the ore up in buckets, or were attending the water mills turned by horses, or the water pump engines turned by water.¹⁰ Warner estimated that in 1808 there was a considerable number of men employed, with up to one hundred and fifty working a single mine shaft.¹¹ This possible increase of men working in a mineshaft may suggest the increasing depth of the mines in the St. Austell area since Fiennes' visit.

Many of the travellers had comments about the labourers at the mines. It was estimated that the livings of a third of the inhabitants of Cornwall were affected directly or indirectly by the fortunes of the mines.¹² "The wealth of smelters, merchants, landowners, stamping mill proprietors, and part of the revenue of the duchy of Cornwall, all depended on the working miner."¹³ Evidence of this has already been reflected in the observations of the travellers when analysing their comments on space, for example the growing trade in the ports and the improvements made to the wastelands by the landowners.

An illustration of this point was the coinage town of Truro, which experienced rapid growth as witnessed by the travellers between 1750 and 1850, due to the nearby expansion of the mines. Pococke was impressed that, "many wealthy people live here", which he attributed to the tin trade. He considered it a small trading town and port, with many good houses. The merchants and shopkeepers did well, he said, as Truro was situated in the centre of the tin and copper mines. It also traded in timber and coal for tin works and engines, and had its own smelting house.¹⁴ When Boswell visited Truro in 1792 he agreed, "there is a good living at Truro".¹⁵ And in

¹⁰ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

¹¹ Revd. Richard Warner, *A tour through Cornwall in the autumn of 1808*, (London, 1809), p. 276.

¹² Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 20

¹⁴ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

¹⁵ James Boswell, 'Jaunt to Cornwall August to September 1792', the privately printed papers from the *Journal of James Boswell* prepared by G. Scott, & F. Pottle (1934), p. 20.

1808 Warner explained that tin was coined and exported to its home and foreign markets from Truro, and copper ore was sent to Wales for manufacturing.¹⁶

As to the improvements in the wastelands, this was attributed to many miners who only spent part of their working life in the mines; otherwise they were cultivating smaller holdings. Redding in 1842 confirmed this when he wrote that the miner usually rented or built his own cottage on leased land, which he cultivated, whilst others were expert fishermen.¹⁷ Collins in 1850 stated that mining was still sufficient to provide a good income, enough to tide the miner over if a mine closed down, or until he found work again. Meantime the cultivation of their plot helped to keep them and their families during those bad times.¹⁸ However Collins' optimism proved to be short-lived, as it was the latter part of the 1850s that copper mining declined, leaving many miners permanently out of work.

White mentioned another form of employment evolving from the mines in Falmouth, where arsenic, found in association with both tin and copper, was converted into a marketable commodity; "the men employed, who with ugly knots or deadly sores on the exposed parts of their skin, show proof of its malignant effect".¹⁹ Rowe suggests little effort was made to utilize the arsenic found in the mines.²⁰ Perhaps it was not exploited to its full potential in comparison to the quantity of copper and tin found. This again displays Cornwall's lack of diversification, with its one-dimensional emphasis on tin and copper mining.

The working miner ranged from the free miner working his own tin-stream or small mine, to casual labourers working for a weekly or daily wage. From medieval times free miners had been declining, yet they still survived. Wage earners were increasing, however there were tributers and tutworkers labouring under contracts made with adventurers, the financiers of the mine. Basically, tutworkers were contracted to do certain work such as sink shafts or excavate minerals, usually within

¹⁶ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁷ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

¹⁸ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁹ Walter White, *A Londoner's walk to the Land's End*, (London, 1865), p. 206.

²⁰ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

a limited time period. Tributing was an agreement with the adventurers to excavate the mineral lodes for a percentage on the value of the metal they raised. Redding commented on the tribute system. He attributed to this the "harmony and equality" that prevailed between miner and employer, and that business was done methodically.²¹ Rule also made this comment, that the heightening of class conflict and the emphasis on the cash nexus as the only link between master and worker, which he regarded as characteristic of the Industrial Revolution elsewhere, did not appear very noticeable in Cornwall. "Broadly speaking, the credit for this industrial passivity and social quietism has been attributed to two main influences, Methodism and the tribute system".²² The system involved the miner bargaining at a form of auction in competition with his fellows, basing the price he would accept on his estimate of the potential of the part of the mine that was up for bidding. He consequently became a co-adventurer with the capitalist in the risks of the enterprise, and therefore was committed to hard work and disinclined to strike action.²³ More on this subject of equality and the character of the miner is dealt with in the next chapter about the people of Cornwall. Collins was not impressed by this system in 1850. He thought the bidding for the contract did not ensure the best money due to the speculative risk of a poor lode, or a mine being shut down.²⁴ Collins was more perceptive than most of the travellers. As Rule points out, supporters of this ancient Cornish system, which they believed could be emulated in other counties of England, had no first-hand knowledge of it. "They seemed to have been quite ignorant of the extraordinary nature of the tributer's gamble which could reduce him to a position of destitution more often than it lifted him to a peak of prosperity."²⁵

A month had nearly ended,
And he severe had wrought
Day after day in darkness,
And it was all for nought.
The mineral vein had faded

²¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

²² John Rule, 'The labouring miner in Cornwall 1740-1870: a study in social history', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Warwick, (1971), p. 349.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 376.

²⁴ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

²⁵ Rule, (1987), *op. cit.*, p. 125.

And now all hope was fled,
 Tomorrow should be payday
 His children have no bread.

The Unsuccessful Tributer by John Harris²⁶

The working conditions of the miner, or the poor, were infrequently commented on by the travellers, however on occasion they made judgement on the degree of poverty with the equivalent in the northern counties. Collins in 1850 thought there was sufficient work to be had, "comparing the rate of wages with rent and the price of provisions; setting the natural advantage of the county fairly against its natural disadvantage, it is impossible not to conclude that the Cornish poor suffer less by their poverty, and enjoy more opportunities of improving their social position, than the majority of their brethren in many other counties of England". He felt the "general demeanour" of the people supported his claim. They were "a cheerful, contented race". "The views of the working men are remarkably moderate and sensible—I never met with so few grumblers anywhere".²⁷ Collins was fortunate enough to witness what Rowe describes as the "Indian Summer" of the Cornish copper mining industry.²⁸ In the 1850s the fortune of copper mining still seemed bright with high copper ore prices, having recovered from the depression and famine time of 1847, and before its eventual decline in the 1860s.²⁹ Earlier in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, many miners struggled to make a living wage, with scarcely enough to set aside for the "proverbial rainy day", which often happened.³⁰ The poorer miners were nearly always in debt to local tradesmen and shopkeepers, due to mine managers holding back wages or paying on a monthly system.³¹

The travellers occasionally referred to the miners' housing. Warner considered that the miner lived comfortably in a small cottage he had built himself, often with a garden.³² Due to the plentiful availability of moor land, the miners typically occupied cottages scattered over the picturesque locations, often on cliff tops, with

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

white-washed walls which suggested to the travellers more comfort than a closer inspection would have revealed. They were very small and often overcrowded, with earth floors, cob walls, no proper foundations, and suffering badly from dampness. The pretty gardens disguised dung heaps and unsanitary septic mudpools.³³ Ayton in 1813 detected that the cottages in the St. Agnes mining area were substandard. There were "a few houses which proclaim defiance to every appearance of comfort and convenience, a few inclosures, called gardens, in which even weeds disdain to grow, and a few other things for the service of man, in the same whimsical style of unfitness".³⁴ However Fiennes had had an agreeable visit to a cottage in 1698. She thought the cottages were like barns, "much like those in Scotland—but to do my own country its right the inside of their little cottages are clean and plastered, and such as you might comfortably eat and drink there, and for curiosity sake I drank there, and met with very good bottled ale".³⁵ By the middle of the nineteenth century only a "small proportion of the total mining population of Cornwall possessed smallholdings or gardens of any size."³⁶ They had become less common as the mining population expanded.³⁷ The remaining population lived in overcrowded and unsanitary cottages, hovels of cob and thatch, with the probability of a low life expectancy. Measles, smallpox, diphtheria, typhoid, and in males mining diseases such as silicosis and phthisis, were prevalent. Rowe maintains that poverty, dirt, and malnutrition killed more than did occupational diseases.³⁸

However, the housing situation of the miner-husbandman in Cornwall was a far cry from the housing experiences of the northern counties collier. In the northeast and the Midlands housing was provided as part of the miner's bond of hiring, and evictions were frequent. With the expansion of the coalmines new colliery villages sprang up overnight, quickly earning the coal mining districts a reputation for having the worst housing conditions in the country. Whole villages were built of 'pit rows' provided by the mineowners, but were of poor quality "without a single cesspool or

³³ Rule, (1987), *op. cit.*, p. 83.

³⁴ Richard Ayton & Willaim Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813*, Vol I, (London, 1978), p. 20.

³⁵ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

³⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

³⁷ Rule, (1987), *op. cit.*, p. 84.

³⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

privy". Overcrowding and unsanitary conditions meant cholera and other diseases flourished. No gardens existed due to the constant smoke that allowed nothing to grow for miles around. And the constant shifting and sinking of the ground caused the house walls to crack.³⁹

The underlying theme to this study is the stagnation of Cornwall's industrialisation due to its inability to diversify into manufacturing partly due to its lack of coal. The necessity to import coal to drive the steam engines has already been discussed. However there was a limit to how much Cornwall could import for expansion into manufacturing due to the expense. This was discovered when various efforts were made in the eighteenth century to operate Cornwall's own smelting works rather than export the ore for smelting in Wales. Many attempts failed due to lack of willingness on the part of the Cornish labourer to work in these smelting works, and the ease with which the ore could be smelted in Bristol and Wales.

Visiting the northern coast in 1698, Fiennes said copper ore was shipped to Bristol rather than Plymouth for smelting, because of the risk of meeting pirates and privateers if they went via Land's End. Bristol also supplied coal for fuel at cheaper rates.⁴⁰ Forbes in 1794 understood that Hayle traded in iron, and Welsh coal for the fire engines and smelting houses. He claimed that often there were from "500 to 1000 horses at a time employed in bringing them inland".⁴¹ Later, on the road out of Truro, he passed strings of pack-horses loaded with tin ore for the few smelting houses operating within the county.⁴² The transportation costs were extremely high.

One solution to the cost of transportation, and the problems of operating the smelting works, lay in using the copper ore ready for smelting, as ballast for the ships returning for more coal. Richard Warner in 1808 wrote of a fleet of trading ships from Bristol and Wales bringing iron and coal for the mines, then loading with copper ore for the journey back, as this way the proprietors found it less expensive to

³⁹ Rule, (1987), *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁴⁰ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

⁴¹ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 191.

export to Wales for smelting than to manufacture themselves, although some ore was still smelted at Hayle.⁴³ An example of a port dealing with this trade was Portreath, a few miles east along the coast from Hayle. Portreath was a "place of considerable bustle and business", wrote Ayton in 1813, a harbour "crowded with vessels, that bring coals to it from Swansea and Neath, and return with copper and tin ore".⁴⁴

As previously mentioned, a smelting works had been in operation at Hayle since 1754, but was later closed down. This was because the cost of wages for the workers was nearly double the amount of the value of the copper sold. Also the cost of fuel was far greater than the operators had anticipated, and, of course, the convenience of the copper ore providing a return cargo to Wales helped to reduce freight charges. As mentioned, another reason for the unpopularity of smelting copper in Cornwall was that the Cornish labouring classes were not happy to smelt copper, especially after hearing of accounts of ill-health and mortality of the employees in the Hayle copper works.⁴⁵ Warner in 1808 made a comment about this when he visited Hayle. "The processes of roasting and refining the ore at Hayle, during which it passes through six or seven furnaces, are highly interesting but the pleasure arising from a sight so curious ... is greatly damped by the appearance of the workmen engaged in it. Nothing can be more shocking than this scene". And here he quoted W. Maton, a tourist who visited in 1794. "Some of the poor wretches who were lading the liquid metal from the furnace to the moulds, looked more like walking corpses than living beings".⁴⁶

By the time Redding visited Hayle in 1842 the copper smelting works had been abandoned. Hayle "now possesses iron works in which the largest steam engines are manufactured, with a degree of good workmanship equal to that in any other place of the like manufacture in England".⁴⁷ Harvey's foundry at Hayle was one of the few manufacturing works in Cornwall, and employed one thousand people at the time.⁴⁸

⁴³ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁴⁴ Ayton, *op. cit.*, (Vol I,) p. 18.

⁴⁵ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

⁴⁷ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁴⁸ A. Shorter, W. Ravenhill, K. Gregory, *Southwest England*, (London, 1969), p. 167.

Due to demand for its engines and components the foundry had grown enormously in the first half of the nineteenth century facilitating Hayle's development as an industrial port.⁴⁹

The smelting works and later the Hayle iron foundry would have attracted labour from the surrounding area, as did the Perran foundry. However this was an unusual occurrence in Cornwall, as there were few large urban centres where industrial expansion offered employment opportunities, which was more a phenomenon of industrialisation in the north. Although, following variations in the fortunes of mining in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, local fluctuations in population occurred, increasing predominantly in the area west of Truro, and later in the nineteenth century a drift occurred toward the new copper mines opening in the east.⁵⁰

Moreover, during times of economic downturn earlier in the nineteenth century, not many unemployed attempted to find work in the industrial belts in the northern counties either, due to the lack of good roads, and the fact that road travel was expensive, and railway connections non-existent. As a large number of the miners were working under contracts as tutworkers, or as tributers with a capital interest in the mines, as opposed to the labourer working for wages in the northern mining districts, they did not have as much freedom to move on without possible financial loss. However, because of numerous harbours near the principal centres, this enabled people to easily emigrate to the colonies. And this was generally what happened during the 'Great Migration' after the 1860s when the copper works starting closing down.

Collins in 1850 believed that emigration was also a contribution to the shortage in labour in Cornwall. "Emigration has been more largely resorted to in that county, than perhaps in any other in England. Out of the population of the Penzance Union alone, nearly five percent left their native land for Australia, or New Zealand in

⁴⁹ Philip Payton, *The making of modern Cornwall*, (Redruth, 1992), p. 76.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

1849.”⁵¹ He maintained that due to the remoteness of Cornwall from the other counties, there was not an influx of labourers looking for work. He used as an illustration a farmer who needed to go to the next town looking for labour to help gather in his crops, and suspected he was to be unsuccessful due to employment in the mines and fisheries.⁵² Miners were more interested in emigrating to where they could still use their mining skills than work as agricultural labourers in their homeland. Payton explains that Cornwall’s “imperfect and incomplete” industrialisation with its over-specialised industrial base, resulted in this over-specialised workforce, which led to the stagnation and economic decline of Cornwall.⁵³

However, in the St. Austell area it appeared that many miners were glad enough to turn to clay-working rather than emigrate or to go elsewhere in England to work in the coalmines.⁵⁴ White in 1854 spoke to miners in the Carclaze mine in the St. Austell area. “There isn’t much tin as there used to be”, said one of the miners, “and we go to work at the clay because it pays best”.⁵⁵ However this was contrary to what most of the miners thought, according to Rowe. “Copper and tin miners regarded clay-working as an inferior occupation and as one positively derogatory to their skill as miners.”⁵⁶ From his observations White estimated that there were more than 7000 people employed in China clay production and transport, raising 80,000 tons of clay for export.⁵⁷ Rowe suggested a more conservative number of only 1,700 employed, raising 68,000 tons from this area for 1857.⁵⁸

Cornwall was surrounded by the sea, therefore an obvious way of making a living was fishing. As Rowe fittingly said, “the history of the men who lived in those harbours, havens, and coves was one of fishing and trading, of fighting and smuggling”.⁵⁹ The travellers did not come across any fighting or smuggling, but

⁵¹ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁵⁴ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

⁵⁵ White, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁵⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁵⁷ White, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

⁵⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

⁵⁹ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

observed plenty of fishing and trading. The fish caught included mackerel, herring, crab, and lobster, as well as the seasonal pilchard catch. The travellers witnessed the fluctuations of affluence and poverty in the fishing industry, with the ebb and flow of the annual run of pilchards, scarcity of salt, the salt duties and outbreaks of war, which had characterised that industry for centuries. Daniell, in 1823, calculated 50,000 pounds annual revenue for the government from Cornwall's export of fish, including receipts for oil and the "bounty of eight shillings per hogshead allowed on exportation".⁶⁰ The bounty Daniell referred to was a compensation for the salt duty imposed intermittently since 1694, and abolished in 1825.⁶¹ In 1850, Collins estimated the Mount's Bay drift netting alone realized 30,000 pounds per annum.⁶² Both offshore seine fishing and drift netting were practised in Cornwall. Seining was the capture of the shoals of pilchards by encircling them in nets close in shore. Drift nets were used in deeper waters further off shore for general fishing.⁶³ Collins noticed in 1850 that traditional methods of fishing had not altered over time. The seine net and the huer on the hill, who gave warning of approaching shoals of fish, were still in use, as were the drift nets in deeper waters.⁶⁴

The closing down of the European markets by Napoleon in 1807 caused a setback in the pilchard fishing industry, as the Mediterranean was the main market. Warner in 1808 explained, "an active pilchard fishery industry was at a standstill with three years stock they were unable to dispose of because of the war".⁶⁵ The main method of disposal of the surplus fish was for manure, because the people could not afford to pay for the salt needed to preserve the fish due to the salt duty. Fish manure prepared the soil for better grain and potato crops, which helped during those years of poverty and hunger.⁶⁶ In 1850, the pilchard fisheries were again bountiful, Collins alleging that the sea "yields annually in almost countless shoals".⁶⁷ He was fortunate to witness a good fish harvest as during the nineteenth century the shoals

⁶⁰ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁶¹ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

⁶² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁶³ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

⁶⁴ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁶⁵ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁶⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

⁶⁷ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

were actually appearing less often. He stated that Italy and Spain were still the foreign markets interested in the pilchards trade, but Great Britain was not. This was because the taste of pilchards was not palatable to many British people.⁶⁸

In 1827 there were 10,500 people employed in the Cornish fisheries, but only 1600 drift-men could be regarded as permanently employed, the remaining being employed for the seasonal work of seining or curing the pilchards.⁶⁹ In 1850 Collins estimated 10,000 persons-men women, and children- derived their living from the fisheries, not only the inhabitants of the coast, but also, during the pilchard season, many farm workers.⁷⁰ The uncertainty of employment was a feature of the fishing industry due to the seasonal run of the pilchards which appeared for only a few weeks a year. As Daniell elucidates, "but for some occult cause, their [the pilchards] numbers are never certain, and the hopes of the fisherman are as precarious as those of a farmer before harvest."⁷¹ Therefore a characteristic of employment in Cornwall was the flexibility of the workers, and their mobility between different livings such as mining and fishing. The reliance on pilchards became a problem when the behavioural patterns of the shoals became unreliable early in the nineteenth century, and their annual run could not be guaranteed. Fishing was to suffer the same fate as copper mining at the same time, due to overspecialisation in seining, eventually being outdone by the drift netting and later, superior technology in stream trawling from the east coast of England.⁷²

It appears Devon's adaptability was more advanced than Cornwall's, for in 1823, in Brixham, Daniell noticed sloops for trawling were being used out at sea for flat fish, turbot, sole and plaice.⁷³ In 1854 White estimated there was a fleet of 200 trawling vessels. Judging by White's description the "Brixham Lords" (the fisherman who held shares in Brixham's trawling fleet) were doing very well. The quay was "crowded with fishing-boats and square-rigged vessels... a ship yard, noisy with the

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁶⁹ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

⁷⁰ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁷¹ William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813*, Vol. VIII, (London, 1978), , p. 26.

⁷² Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁷³ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

blows of adzes and hammers, and odorous with pitch and tar ... piles of baskets, heaps of nets, and amphibious-looking men and women.”⁷⁴ Brixham’s advantage was it was able to send the fish to markets in London, Bath and Bristol by rail from nearby Torquay.⁷⁵ Meanwhile Cornwall had not, as yet, been connected by rail to London, so its fishing industry suffered.

So far, the only workers and labourers mentioned have been men. Many of the travellers noticed a significant number of women and children working around the mines, fisheries and farms. John Rowe stated that in mining “there is little evidence of any extensive employment of female labour even on surface jobs until the end of the eighteenth century”, although a number of observations were made by the travellers specifically about women and children.⁷⁶ Women were found to be labouring in surface jobs around the mines in the mid 1700s, but there were no reports of women and children working underground. Schwartz confirms that “females had been working since the early eighteenth century as bal maidens, receiving wages up to about one shilling a day.”⁷⁷

Pococke in 1750 saw women and children separating the earth from the ore in Chasewater.⁷⁸ Boswell in 1792 thought that the “men, women, and children employed in beating and sorting and otherwise preparing the ore and stone seemed active and cheerful”.⁷⁹ Forbes in 1794 commented about the labour he saw working around the tin stream. “I am pleased to see so many women and boys engaged in the latter parts of this work as I always am with any manufactory that gives employment to the female sex whose province is too often intruded on by the other”.⁸⁰ In 1808, Warner also claimed that many women and children prepared the ore after it was raised.⁸¹ Schwartz suggests that the large numbers of female labourers working on

⁷⁴ White, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁷⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

⁷⁷ Sharron P. Schwartz, ‘In defence of customary rights: labouring women’s experience of industrialization in Cornwall, c1750-1870’, in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish studies second series seven*, (Exeter, 1999), p. 14.

⁷⁸ Cartwright, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

⁷⁹ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁸⁰ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

⁸¹ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

mine sites "might help to explain the diminishing importance of domestic textile manufacture in Cornwall".⁸² This may well be another factor responsible for the deficiency of industrial diversification within Cornwall.

In small scale farming, Warner noticed in 1808 that at harvest time mainly women were employed.⁸³ Forbes in 1794 met farmers' wives and daughters carrying their commodities on horseback to the market towns on the road to Truro.⁸⁴ Historically, there was nothing unusual about women helping with the harvest or working on the land. However the role of women in this area is often overlooked. Schwartz states that it was the labouring women "who often undertook the main responsibility of cultivating allotments " and looking after the animals, thereby providing valuable support to their husbands who were often working down the mines."⁸⁵

In the fishing trade, Warner learnt in Marazion, that the 'bulkiers' generally were women who prepared and piled the pilchards into the curing house.⁸⁶ Daniell in Portwrinkle in 1823 watched the occupation of a number of men, women, and children in the various processes of washing, salting, and pressing fish, together with the manufacture of nets, ropes, and casks.⁸⁷ In Penzance in 1842, Redding described how "fishwomen" carry their fish in a basket on their back held by a strap passing over their head called a cowal. He said they mainly lived in Mousehole and Newlyn, coming in on market days, and also brought in train oil in pitchers for sale.⁸⁸ Collins in 1850 painted a scene of women working in a salting house.

Here we see crones of sixty and girls of sixteen; the ugly and the lean, the comely and the plump; the sour-tempered and the sweet- all squabbling, singing, jesting, lamenting and shrieking at the very top of their very shrill voices for 'more fish', and 'more salt', both of which are brought ... in small buckets, by a long train of children running backwards and forwards with unceasing activity and in bewildering confusion".⁸⁹

⁸² Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁸⁴ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

⁸⁵ Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁸⁶ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁸⁷ Daniel, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁸⁸ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁸⁹ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

In the coastal trade in 1850, Collins thought, "the women take a very fair share of the hard work out of the men's hands". In Looe he saw women carrying coals from the vessels to the quay in hand-barrows. "As to the men, one absorbing interest appears to govern them all. The whole day long they are mending boats, painting boats, cleaning boats, rowing boats, or, standing with their hands in their pockets, looking at boats."⁹⁰

In the clay works as well, gangs of men, women and boys were seen by White in 1854 "variously employed". The women and boys were carrying the clumps of clay to the drying ground.⁹¹ And in Port Isaac, in 1813, Ayton watched women loading slates into a small sloop. He made the comment about their labour being equal to men, but their wages being considerably less because they were women,⁹² an issue James Forbes did not consider when earlier he commented on women working around the tin streams.

Nevertheless, the travellers portrayed working women and children in Cornwall in a much better light than the reports of women working in the mines, factories and workshops in the midlands and northern counties. In 1814 Ayton was shocked to encounter "beastly girls" in a "place the character of a hell" when he summoned up sufficient nerve to descend some 630 feet into one of Lord Lonsdale's coal mines in Cumberland.

We were called upon to make way for a horse, which passed by with its long line of baskets, and driven by a young girl, covered with filth, debased and profligate, and uttering some low obscenity as she hurried by us. We were frequently interrupted in our march by the horses proceeding in this manner with their cargoes to the shaft, and always driven by girls, all of the same description, ragged and beastly in their appearance, and with a shameless indecency in their behaviour, which, awe-struck as one was by the gloom and loneliness around one, had something quite frightful in it, and gave the place the character of a hell.⁹³

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁹¹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁹² Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 17.

⁹³ Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol II, p. 155.

Ayton was also moved by the number of children he encountered attending the doors to allow the horses to pass through.

When I first came to these doors, I saw it open without perceiving by what means, till, looking behind it, I beheld a miserable little wretch standing without a light, silent and motionless. ... I was touched with the patience and uncomplaining meekness with which it submitted to its horrible imprisonment.

... Few of the children thus inhumanly sacrificed were more than eight years old, and several were considerably less, and had barely strength sufficient to perform the office that was required from them.⁹⁴

He proclaimed the children worked thirteen hours a day, which is considerably more than the eight hours a day the men worked in the mines in Cornwall.⁹⁵ Women and children were not employed on such a scale as the northern counties because firstly, there were no large factories in Cornwall, especially not compared to the textile works in the north, and secondly there was sufficient labour without requiring women and children to work underground in the mines.

And finally, any discussion of the ways in which Cornish people were employed in the eighteenth and nineteenth century would not be complete unless 'wrecking' was referred to. According to Rowe, the belief that 'wrecking' consisted of the practice of luring ships off course on stormy nights by lanterns tied to donkey's tails was an idea created by romancers.⁹⁶ Redding believed the Cornish men incapable of such barbarity when he exclaimed that the stories of donkeys with lanterns tied to them and the cutting off of fingers for rings were untruths as the Cornish would not allow such an "atrocious man within their society".⁹⁷ Certainly when Daniell in 1823 witnessed a sloop in trouble below Castle Treneen, on the lower south coast, there was no attempt made to lure the vessel on to the rocks. He watched as some pilchard boats went to her assistance and towed her away to safety. "It was very satisfactory to see her, at a later hour of the day, beating round the Land's End very successfully."⁹⁸ Redding was adamant that the charge of Cornish barbarity was

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁹⁷ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

⁹⁸ Daniell, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

untrue, "as in no part of England shipwrecked persons meet with greater kindness", due to such a large proportion of the county being connected to the sea"⁹⁹. However, there was no doubt that marauding villagers plundered stricken ships wrecked on the wild Cornish coast. Redding did say that country people picked up and appropriated cargo and timbers, which had been washed up on the shores from wrecked vessels.¹⁰⁰ White in 1854 stayed with a boot repairer who explained his means of living as also including selling ginger beer, and frequently "a forage on the beach after a storm".¹⁰¹ Cornwall was not alone in marauding wrecks, as Devon had also enjoyed the benefits of wrecked ships on its shores. Ayton spoke to some pilots at Combe-Martin in 1813 who subsisted by fishing and by piloting vessels in the Bristol Channel.

They felt themselves somewhat scandalised, however, by these simple pursuits. They were occasionally assisted, they told us, by a wreck; but this was a very uncertain casualty, and scarcely to be hoped for twice in a winter. We had frequent conversations on this subject with various boatmen during our voyage, and always discovered that they consider it in no degree a moral offence to plunder a wreck. When a vessel is once driven ashore, they look upon it as justly lost to the owner, and sent to be fairly scrambled for by all those who will hazard their lives for the spoil. ... They talk of a good wreck-season as they do of a good mackerel-season, and thank Providence for both.¹⁰²

The local Devon people were just as guilty of perpetuating the myth of smuggling and wrecking as the Cornish were.

In conclusion, although a higher percentage of the Cornish were employed in agriculture, the miners dominated the travellers' writings. Many of the livings in Cornwall indirectly depended on the miners for their livelihood. The landowners benefited from the miners clearing their wastelands, the merchants relied on mining to maintain their shipping concerns in the ports, and the pilchard fishermen for work when the shoals did not appear. The miners represented Cornwall's early industrialisation, and technical expertise. Women's labour was also found to be important in surface jobs at the mines, involved in small scale farming, and was

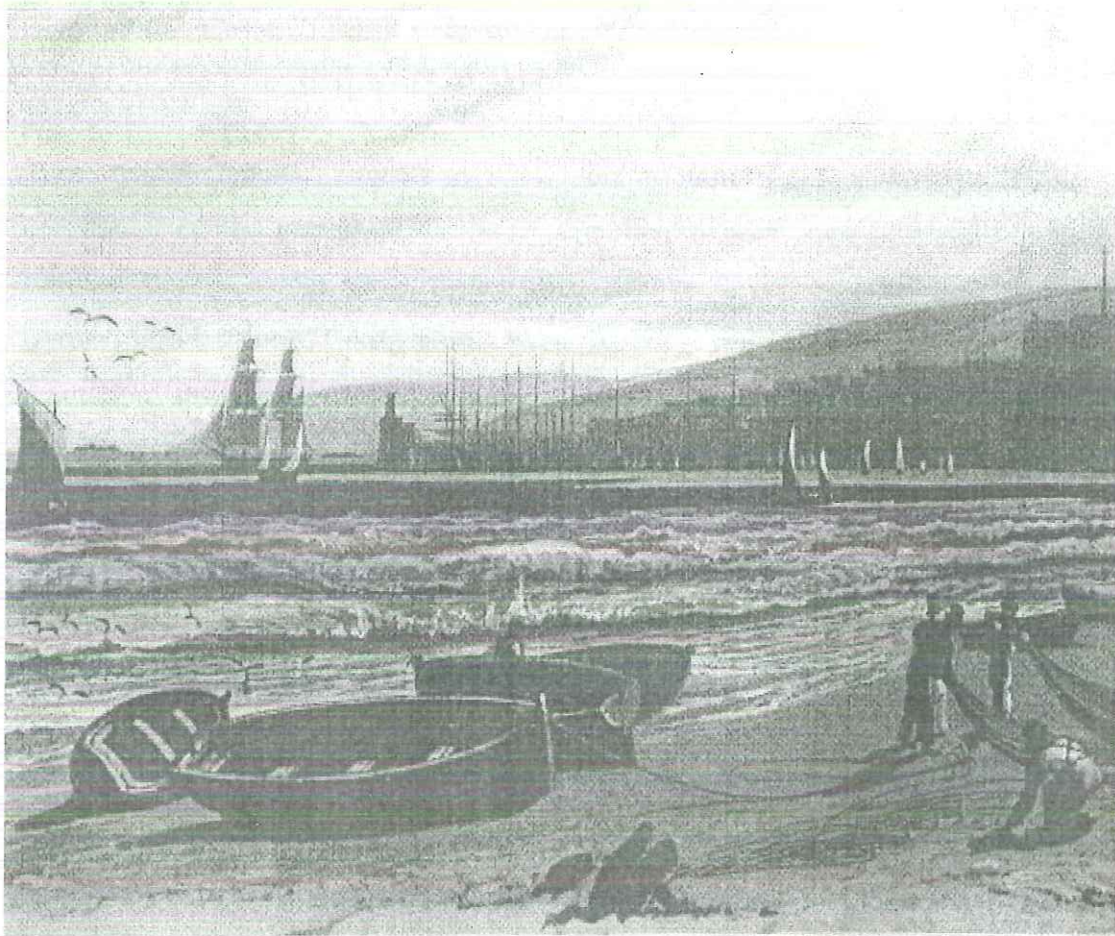
⁹⁹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

¹⁰² Ayton, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 51.

found to play an indispensable role in the seasonal pilchard industry. The living and working conditions of the men, women and children working at both the mines and the harbours were found to be superior in comparison to their counterparts in the northern counties. However, the over-specialisation of the miners and the seine fisherman in their skills, and their inability to diversify resulted in their redundancy when the copper deposits were exhausted and the pilchards disappeared, many migrating to work in mines overseas, affecting the decline in the Cornish economy in the later half of the nineteenth century.



Penzance, Cornwall

Illustration by William Daniell in William Daniell, *A voyage Round Great Britain*, Vol. Viii, (London, 1978,) p.63.

The game called the Hurlers, is a thing the Cornish men value themselves much upon; ... it is a rude violent play among the boors, or country people; brutish and furious, and a sort of an evidence, that they were, once, a kind of barbarians.¹

These words of Daniel Defoe's in 1724, were an indication of most travellers' pre-conception of the people of Cornwall and their expectations of their behaviour. Bernard Deacon wrote about Cornwall's narrative of achievement between West Barbary and Industrial Civilisation. 'West Barbary' was represented by the Cornish reputation for drunkenness, violence and lawlessness symbolized in hurling, wrestling and wrecking. 'Industrial Civilisation' was the image the Cornish adopted to represent the technical progress dominant in industrialising Cornwall, and a moral upheaval encouraged by Methodism. But as Deacon explains; "in the retelling of this myth in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries West Barbary became more barbarian and Industrial Civilisation more civilised."² In effect, sense of place for Cornwall was embodied by both smuggling and mining. Travellers went to Cornwall in expectation of West Barbary and came away with praise for Industrial Civilisation as portrayed by the Cornish, which was even more impressive to them due to Cornwall's advanced industrialisation exhibiting early evidence of a complex industrial society.

As Payton clearly explains, industrialisation had led to a "new assertive 'Cornishness' which perpetuated Cornwall's distinct sense of identity, despite the decline in ... traditional symbols".³ Her worldwide importance in metalliferous mining, and her place in the forefront of industrialisation were a new phenomenon for Cornwall that removed her from the image of West Barbary into Industrial Civilisation.⁴ Like Payton, Deacon explains that the parallel growth of regional self-assertiveness accompanying industrialisation led to the appropriation of new symbols of peculiarity being somehow different from others, which gives meaning to

¹ Daniel Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain*, (Harmondsworth, 1971), p 243.

² Bernard Deacon, 'The hollow jarring of the distant steam engines: images of Cornwall between West Barbary and Delectable Duchy', in E. Westland, (Ed.), *Cornwall, the cultural construction of Place*, (Penzance, 1997), p. 11.

³ Philip Payton, *The making of modern Cornwall*, (Redruth, 1992), p.94.

⁴ *Ibid.*

living in a place at a time of profound change. Deacon goes on to say that due to economic specialisation in a region of relatively socially equal communities bound together by Methodism, there was a growing desire for the inhabitants to define their place and themselves as different.⁵ In other words, in moving from Cornwall's traditional past - West Barbary - into a homogenous industrial community over a relatively short period of time, the Cornish needed to retain their individuality, peripherality and difference. Consequently, the "people themselves were clinging to and even inventing differences".⁶ And visitors to Cornwall were prepared to acknowledge any sign of difference. James Boswell in 1792 made an observation that visitors were also inventing differences. During a dinner with Sir William Lemon, at which Boswell was a guest, various remarks were bandied around the table. When one remark could have been misconstrued, the speaker pleaded that Boswell should not print it if he should write a book on his tour around Cornwall. Boswell commented "yet travellers have drawn conclusions upon as slight a foundation. 'It is custom in Cornwall' - and so they will gravely remark from superficial, hasty ignorance".⁷

The travellers were unconsciously exploring connections between people and places, their lives and their lands, the peculiarities and personalities of place. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were an age of vital and rapid change. Philip Payton explains that this era witnessed "the swift decline of ancient institutions on the one hand and the arrival of new ideas and technologies on the other, but with change tempered and sometimes moulded by conditions surviving from earlier times".⁸ This unusual combination of old and new therefore presented to the travellers a people quite different to the rest of Britain, not in the manner they had expected, with smugglers and barbarians, but with a unique disposition and view on their own world and way of life. The elements of the 'old' entailed a continued geographical distance from the centres of economic and political power, the autonomous practices of the mining industry with its Stannaries, tutworkers and tributers, driven by an

⁵ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ James Boswell, 'Jaunt to Cornwall August to September 1792', the privately printed papers from the *Journal of James Boswell* prepared by G. Scott, & F. Pottle (1934), p. 14.

⁸ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

independently minded people, while the 'new' saw the emergence of deep-lode copper mining and encompassed an "assertive Cornish identity based upon technological advance and industrial prowess."⁹ It must be remembered that though widespread industrialisation thrust the Cornish economy into the forefront of technological advance, yet overspecialisation created an imperfect, incomplete industrialisation, which was to see mass emigration and would again see the refinement of the Cornish identity and sense of place. The Cornish obstinate determination to sustain mining, and the reluctance, and eventual inability to diversify into new industries, was an underpinning factor in Cornwall's problem of overspecialisation.¹⁰ The Cornish people's "sanguine temperament" and "indomitable perseverance" could be held responsible for this obstinacy.¹¹ As du Maurier proposes "There is in the Cornish character, smouldering beneath the surface, ever ready to ignite, a fiery independence, a stubborn pride",¹²

Methodism was an important influence on the people during the transition from West Barbary to Industrial Civilisation. The Wesleyan Methodists first visited Cornwall in 1743 and appealed to the largely illiterate mining communities of Cornwall, where clergymen were few, or not very active in their spiritual duties. In the western copper mining region roughly bounded by St. Agnes, Penryn, Helston, Marazion, and Hayle, the population had outgrown the availability of the Anglican parish churches, many of which were a considerable distance from the mines.¹³ John Rowe maintains that there was a "neglect of religious duties by the clergy" and that an increase in population had outgrown the religious facilities.¹⁴ He goes on to say that Anglicanism was "out of tune" with the enterprising spirit of an age of industrial expansion as much as were the "semi pagan superstitions of the illiterate masses".¹⁵

The Anglican Church was unable to adapt itself to economic change and no longer adequately fulfilled the role of a religious organization. Thus a gap appeared

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹² Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, (London, 1972), p. 11.

¹³ John Rowe, *Cornwall in the age of the Industrial Revolution*, (St. Austell, 1993), p. 67.9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

between the church and the people.¹⁶ This was noticed in 1794 by James Forbes when he reported that “too many of the farmers in Cornwall, especially near the Land’s End, where spirits are extremely cheap, are very fond of drinking, and set a bad example to their families and dependants”. He blamed this on “another great evil”, which was the non-residence of the clergy among their parishioners”.¹⁷

The Methodists enlivened and invigorated Cornish religious life.¹⁸ “Methodism in Cornwall, based on community and household, was a means through which traditions, perception and culture were preserved. It acted as a badge of regionalism in the face of encroaching external forces.”¹⁹ The mining workplace reinforced notions of independence and economic enterprise, while the democratic flavour of Cornish Methodism was an alternative focus of loyalty to the workplace affinity of informal co-operation.²⁰ According to Payton the popularity of Methodism and liberalism in Cornwall owed much to the inherent individualism and independence of the Cornish people as well as the culture of industrialisation.²¹

Many of the travellers attributed to the Methodists the moral improvement of the Cornish people, and the removal of the imagery of West Barbary. The Reverend Warner attributed the Wesleyan Methodists to having a purifying influence, ending the wrestling, cock-fighting, battles and riotous revellings.²² Rowe believes those heathen ills of the pre-Wesleyan period were more legendary than factual, embellished by such travellers as the Reverend Warner.²³ This may well be so as many of the travellers were expecting to find West Barbary and were prepared to inflate any examples they found. However, on closer inspection these travellers did not personally witness any scenes of immoral or lawless behaviour. To illustrate, Richard Ayton commented that “the lower orders of people in Cornwall are to this day notorious for drunkenness” for which information he refers the reader to

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ James Forbes, ‘Tour into Cornwall to the Land’s End’, in *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 4, 2 (1983), p. 168.

¹⁸ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 67.11.

¹⁹ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

²² Revd. Richard Warner, *A tour through Cornwall in the autumn of 1808*, (London, 1809), p. 301.

²³ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 67.3.

Polwhele's *History of Cornwall*, and not to any drunkenness he had actually witnessed himself.²⁴ Redding also supposed "the humbler classes in Cornwall were much softened and civilised by the preaching of Wesley".²⁵ However Rowe claims that, although drinking and "roistersome traditional sports" came under the ban of Methodist excommunication, a number of other influences caused the demise of these so-called evils.²⁶ Smuggling was suppressed more by the deployment of naval cutters after the Napoleonic wars, the availability of tea he thinks "probably had more to do with the alleged reduction in drunkenness", and wrestling and hurling matches most likely became less frequent due to the increasing production of tin and copper giving labourers less leisure time to pursue such pastimes.²⁷ Warner recognised this when he wrote:

Their dangerous wrestling and hurling matches are now of much rarer occurrence than heretofore; the spirit of sport has nearly evaporated, and that of industry supplied its place. The occupations in the mining countries fill up the time of those engaged in them too effectually to allow leisure for prolonged revels, or frequent festivities; and in other parts of Cornwall, the constant pursuits of steady labour have banished the traditional times and seasons of vulgar riot and dissipation.²⁸

Rule confirms that the reduction in feasts, sports and holidays was more due to the "increasing control of the miners' holidays ... an aspect of the industry's capitalisation which came on top of the increasing discipline of the working day itself".²⁹ For example at the beginning of the nineteenth century a local steward complained of the so-called holidays costing "the shareholders in tin and copper mines dearly".³⁰

A few festivals still remained however, and some of the travellers mentioned them. The ancient festival in Helston held on the 8th of May was one of these. However, it must be noted that not one of the travellers mentioned had actually witnessed the

²⁴ Richard Ayton & William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813, Vol I*, (London, 1978), p. 28.

²⁵ Cyrus Redding, *Illustrated itinerary of the county of Cornwall*, (London, 1843), p. 188.

²⁶ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 67.20.

²⁸ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

²⁹ John Rule, *The labouring classes in early industrial England, 1750-1850*, (London, 1987), p. 218.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

festival, but were relying on comments by the villagers, and Polwhele's *History of Cornwall*. This was again verification that they were prepared to highlight West Barbary, even though they themselves did not observe it. Redding understood that this remote town of Helston, being away from the main roads, "is noted for the continuance of old customs, and the kindly manners of its inhabitants have been long a subject of remark".³¹ He explained how the 8th of May festival, or Furry Day, was a day when the people went into the fields and collected flowers and green boughs and commenced to dance in and out of peoples' homes while collecting money for the urchins at the grammar school.³² In 1808 Warner declared the collection was spent on gambling at the day's sports. He said the higher classes used to assist in these rites, dancing like the crowd and entering private houses. "This custom, however, has vanished before modern refinement ... then resorting to the ball-room, where the evening is closed by the genteel inhabitants with a ball and supper".³³ Redding, in 1842, agreed that the practice was diminishing every year, changing towards "the single entertainment of a ball".³⁴ He, however, was not so happy about the change.

The mixture of vulgar pride and ignorant exclusiveness so prevalent in these times in the middle ranks of society, the separation of the different classes is with much impolicy rendered wider. The classes never momentarily linked, and kindness changing to indifference, dislike and antipathy towards each other are shown upon the most trivial occasions. Thus old things that are harmless, and even beneficial ... are disappearing.³⁵

This gentry toleration of "plebeian sports" and festivals had once been essential for their existence, but as social distance increased a cultural barrier developed between them and the 'common' people.³⁶ The gentry endeavoured to steer the people into more sober pastimes such as those Redding mentioned, for example balls and evening dances. Celebrations such as the Helston 'furry' dance, even if rooted in pagan antiquity, "fostered and kept alive that sense of community which a later age was to lose and mourn".³⁷

³¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

³⁴ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

³⁶ Rule, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

³⁷ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

A few years later in 1850, Collins was unimpressed when he visited Helston.

Its principal recommendation ... appeared to be that it was the residence of several very 'genteel families', who have certainly not communicated much of their gentility to the lower orders of the population-a riotous and drunken set, the only bad specimens of Cornish people that I met with in Cornwall. ... In short the town has nothing to offer to attract the stranger, but a public festival-a sort of barbarous carnival-held there annually on the 8th of May. [The genteel families were also] infected with the general madness, [by ending the day with a grand ball.]³⁸

Collins relates no unfortunate episodes that would have explained his negative attitude toward Helston, therefore it is assumed the accounts he received about the furry dance were at odds with his sense of morality. Collins thought the festival a collection of "extraordinary absurdities".³⁹ He was in all probability ready to accept a display of 'barbarity', because, again, the imagery of West Barbary was what the travellers expected to find.

The attitudes some of the gentry had towards the 'lower orders' revealed that many were not ready to set aside the image of West Barbary for something different – more representative of an Industrial Civilisation. James Boswell in 1792 made various comments, which were an example of this.

I amused myself during this jaunt [to Land's End] with remarks on the inhabitants of the country, whom I called Cornish Clouts, from Spenser's Colin Clout. I talked of them as wild animals; and that droves of them might be seen running about with bare legs, some with shoes, some without. One of them yesterday gaped and laughed like a fool when I said to F. Temple, 'There's one that is shod. But he must have been worked.' They truly reminded one of Yahoos.⁴⁰

His intolerance surfaced once more when he thought St. Michaels Mount would be a "charming residence" if they removed the town at its base, which he called "a disgusting nuisance to have a parcel of low, dirty people collected there, and a vile smell of spoiled fish and garbage lying about".⁴¹ Boswell was a prejudiced member of the upper class and therefore did not have an open mind toward change or

³⁸ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles beyond railways*, (London, 1982), p. 59.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 23..

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

difference from his strict classification of the classes and their behaviour. This becomes clear judging by Boswell's comment made when riding with a friend after a pleasant afternoon spent at Sir Frances Basset's house, Tehidy. Feeling very smug he said that they had "joined in support of subordination of rank, by which all the elegance of life is produced".⁴² As evidence of their values, Sir Frances Basset was later, in 1795, involved in suppressing a riot by miners against corn dealers, and insisted upon a miner being hanged. As a result from this example he believed "the manners of the people were suddenly changed from rudeness and disrespect to proper obedience".⁴³ However, although there were riots in separate instances throughout Cornwall, they were nothing compared to the 'machine breaking' riots of the north.

However, there were visitors more in tune with the experiences and anguish of the working classes. They were usually businessmen or gentlemen more involved in the economic changes caused by industrialisation in their own counties and more accepting of changes or difference they found in Cornwall. A sympathetic Reverend Warner in 1808 was ashamed of the behaviour of merchants in St. Ives who refused to finance a lifeboat needed when storms wrecked anchored boats in the town basin. "So insensible were the merchants of the place to the dangers and sufferings of the hardy race who fill their coffers" that they were unable to raise "the poor pittance required for the purpose".⁴⁴ Walter White met a shoemaker who would have agreed about the dire treatment by the 'higher orders', as he spoke of "the 'genelfolk' [who were] a little too hard on the poor, and had a notion that government might do something to mitigate the effects of local despotisms" and felt compelled to go to America if he felt sure he would be better off.⁴⁵

A culture of industrialisation, the image represented by technical progress and moral change, was obviously more developed in the mining regions. It was here the travellers became more aware of the independent, assertive Cornish character. A

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴³ Rowe, *op. cit.*, p. 105

⁴⁴ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁴⁵ Walter White, *A Londoner's walk to the Land's End*, (London, 1865), p. 171.

move into industrial civilisation became apparent when Collins visited the Redruth mining area in 1850, and was very aware of an industrialised society. "People became less curious to know who we were, stared at us less, gossiped with us less; gave us information, but gave us nothing more –no long stories, no invitations to stop and smoke a pipe, no hospitable offers of bed and board ... We had left the picturesque and the primitive, with the streets of Looe and the fisherman at the Land's End; and had got into the commercial part of the country, among sharp, prosperous, businesslike people".⁴⁶ When Collins comments are compared with Celia Fiennes one hundred and fifty years earlier in 1698, the transition into this industrial culture is evident. She remarked about the curiosity of the people in the Redruth and west Cornwall area, as to where and how far she was going and from where she had come from, but knowing little beyond their home and maybe the market town they frequented.⁴⁷

The "businesslike people" Collins referred to was a generalisation, rather than a statement about class. As mentioned earlier in the chapter on livings, the overall Cornish business sense and feelings of equality were attributed to the miners and the system of tributing and tutworking. Many of the travellers had something to say about the miners, and made comparisons to coal miners in the north of England, and other labourers in Cornwall. Warner described the miners as different to "all other tribes of workmen" because of the uncertainty of their work and their share in the profits.⁴⁸ He believed the prospecting kept up their spirits, "renders their minds lively and alert, and prevents that dullness which generally characterises the English labourer". This was, he said, due to the miner's interest in the profits of the lodes they were working, and therefore their arithmetic and mechanical knowledge were good. They were "civil and respectful in their manners, and sober and decent in their conduct". "Drunkenness is by no means a practice with them" as their chief beverages were water and tea.⁴⁹ In a similar vein Redding alleged "the Cornish miner ... is a superior being to the agricultural labourer, who is ever little above the

⁴⁶ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁴⁷ Christopher Morris, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685 -- 1712*, (London, 1982), p. 207.

⁴⁸ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

mill-horse in his nature".⁵⁰ His explanation for this was that the miner needed to use his own judgement in new situations as his wages arose from contracts, (tributing) whereas the agricultural labourer was confined by habit to a set task. Redding also compared them to the coal miner. "The miners ... are a very kind and civil body of men. (He was perhaps generalising and not considering past riots by miners). We must not confound them with those who work under-ground in the coal counties, and their brutal habits. ... Everyday the Cornish men shifted their clothes after labour, and washed themselves" unlike their northern counterparts. "In manner too they were milder and better behaved".⁵¹ Collins agreed the miners were advanced. "As a body of men, [the miners] are industrious and intelligent, sober and orderly; neither soured by hard work, nor easily depressed by harder privations".⁵² He thought they were better educated, not only with mechanical knowledge but also about the history of Cornwall. He considered the fisherman and agricultural labourers appeared to be the least educated, with ancient superstitions surviving. However, he said there were good national schools open to the poorest classes throughout Cornwall.⁵³

White in 1854 confirmed this when he met a boy driving a cart in one of the lanes near Polperro. Though the boy had never been to any other town than Looe, "an event to be remembered", White found he had been to school and could read and write and "do sums", as all the boys he knew in the area could. "He was an intelligent boy for his class. Some others, whom I fell in with afterwards, fully confirmed the School Inspector's Reports as to the dense ignorance on some subjects prevailing in certain parts of Cornwall."⁵⁴ White would have been referring to the government inspector Henry Tremenheere's report in 1841, when he estimated that just over fifty percent of the age group from five to fifteen were not receiving daily school instruction out of a sample of seven parishes in one of Cornwall's mining districts.⁵⁵ Rule suggests it was the rural population who neglected the education of their young principally because smaller farmers resented their children receiving

⁵⁰ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁵² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁵⁴ White., *op. cit.*, p. 181.

⁵⁵ Rule, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

schooling, which they themselves lacked.⁵⁶ Similar to the rest of England, large landowners and the gentry usually educated their children. For example Boswell's friend Francis Temple's son read to him every morning a lesson in Greek from Homer's *Iliad*, Book 5, and from Cicero against Cataline, whilst he was staying at Temple's vicarage⁵⁷.

Further comparisons were made by the travellers, detecting differences, not in the miners' education, but in their dexterity and resourcefulness. While White was walking through the market in Truro he said, "you can distinguish rustics from miners and fishers; the latter have the look of men accustomed to reflect and observe, to find in themselves resources against emergencies".⁵⁸ White's comment differs here from Collins by categorising miners and fisherman into a more resourceful, practical class, whereas Collins grouped fisherman and agricultural labourers together as the least educated. White goes on to evaluate the mining population;

Though in the main... 'a rough lot', you will see... a marked difference between miners and field-labourers. The intelligence gleaming in their eyes, and their general expression, denote a habit of thinking for themselves, as you will find by their shrewd remarks, if you get into talk with them. In daily conflict with rude circumstances, their native resources are developed and multiplied. Their ingenuity is manifest in the numerous improvements they have made in their tools and machinery.⁵⁹

White and Collins may have been aware of the discussion on Cornish mining, and the approval of tributing and tutworking by eminent supporters such as J. S. Mill. In 1845 Mill reported that for "intelligence, independence, and good conduct as well as prosperous circumstances, no labouring population in the island understood to be comparable to the Cornish miners".⁶⁰ Mill wrote highly of a system he thought raised the condition of the Cornish miners, who were invariably joint-adventurers, "far above that of the generality of the labouring class".⁶¹ The above observations

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Boswell, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ White, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 294.

⁶⁰ Rule, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

verify the travellers' images of West Barbary being transferred to a culture of Industrial Civilisation.

The travellers' impressions of the Cornish differed somewhat from their opinions of the people they met in Devon. In 1854 White on more than one occasion referred to the labourers he met on his journey as rustics, or in Bantham they were "half rustic, half fisher species".⁶² He also commented on their predilection for drinking, mainly cider, and on a Sunday "the habit of deep drinking, shamed from our high places, lingers in the nooks and corners of the land".⁶³ Thomas Mills in 1863, also referred to them as "Sunday-clad rustics" and "simpletons".⁶⁴ His and White's judgments were fashioned from long-standing prejudices, and were significant when compared to their encounter with the Cornish character. Devon was largely an agricultural community, whereas Cornwall's industrialised society was well established by the 1850s.

However, the miners' appearance and manners elicited mixed reactions from the travellers. Ayton came across some miners in 1813, who had just come up from a mine in St. Agnes, "whose manners betrayed strong evidence of having been formed at least twenty fathoms below the surface of the earth. They have a very unhealthy appearance, which is easily accounted for ... resulting from exposure to bad air, and sudden and violent changes in its temperature".⁶⁵ A decade later, Daniell spoke of miners in the St. Austell area. "The sallow and gloomy aspect of these men increase the feelings of melancholy and distrust with which a stranger is beset when he enters upon this dreary region; and it is difficult in the first instance, for the mind to associate the idea of honest and useful labour with an occupation carried on far from the light of day, in the secret recesses of the earth".⁶⁶ To the contrary, Collins thought that the "miners are a fine-looking race of men—strong and well proportioned". He did not think the hard work and bad air affected them much,

⁶² White, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁶⁴ Thomas H Mills, *A week's wanderings in Cornwall and Devon*, (London, 1863), p. 134.

⁶⁵ Ayton, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁶⁶ William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813, Vol VIII*, (London, 1978), p. 48.

which he attributed to the "pure air of the cliffs and moors on which their cottages are built, and the temperance of their lives (many of them are teetotallers)".⁶⁷

The positive attributes of the mining population were by the early nineteenth century being projected onto the Cornish working class as a whole. It was particularly a sense of equality and a general lack of class consciousness that the travellers frequently noted as extraordinary in Cornwall, compared to the deference shown to them by the lower classes in the rest of Britain. This was due to a number of reasons, not least of them being Methodism's egalitarianism as discussed earlier. Industrialisation also played a large part in that people of different social classes were thrown together due to common speculative interests. The comparative absence of a powerful aristocracy contributed to the people's ambivalent attitude towards authority and the law, which may have been detrimental to deferential relationships as found elsewhere in Britain.⁶⁸ The combination of a relatively weak aristocracy and early industrialisation also provided opportunities of social mobility, which occurred earlier in Cornwall than elsewhere. Even at the time of Defoe's visit in 1724 there was evidence that the wealth accrued from the mining had set the benefactors up very well. When Defoe arrived in Penzance the "great many good families of gentlemen" surprised him as he expected them to be underprivileged. "They are supposed to be so poor" due to their remoteness from London. He concluded the wealth was due to the tin and copper ore found in abundance in the area.⁶⁹

The travellers were also astonished to find a general lack of reverence afforded them as gentleman and members of the gentry. To illustrate this, Ayton explained his surprise at the lack of respect shown toward himself and William Daniell when they were trying to arrange for a fisherman to sail them along the coast from St Ives for a few hours in 1813. They found the demands of the boatmen "extravagant".

The pilchard fishery has put a few shillings into their pockets, so that they could afford to be insolent, and affected a most galling indifference whether they obliged us or not. ... The boatmen never condescended to flatter, but

⁶⁷ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁶⁸ Edwin Jaggard, *Cornwall politics in the age of reform 1790 - 1885*, (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 19.

⁶⁹ Defoe, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

cheated us with an air of assurance that was almost respectable. They are a fine bold set of fellows, and as their common occupation of fishing, laborious and perilous as it is, returns them but a scanty subsistence, they may, perhaps, be excused for now and then hooking a stray gentleman ... who, they suppose, travels from his home for the express purpose of scattering his money about him with heedless profusion.⁷⁰

James Forbes in 1794 was “forcibly struck” by the outspokenness by a serving maid about her master, after whom he had enquired. He thought “few servants in the metropolis” would have testified in such a manner.⁷¹ Thomas Mills in 1863 also noticed this lack of servility when he spoke generally about the Cornish.

The men of Cornwall ... are what is [sic] popularly known as ‘regular bricks’. There is nothing like servility about them. The labourer or peasant you pass in the road ... wishes you a frank and courteous ‘good morning’, but does it with an air of independence and in a manner that shows he thinks himself quite as good as you ... no ‘cringing’ is there in his demeanour like I have seen nearer home, and neither does he ‘sir’ you at every pause in his discourse. And then, again, there is a greater seeming of equality among the different classes ... which, without lowering any, adds to the good feeling of all.⁷²

Mills used as an example the collection of men in *The Last Inn* where the landowner was “cheek by jowl” with the blacksmith and the carpenter, and the owner of the small fishing fleet was drinking with the fishermen.⁷³ Payton quotes A. L. Rowse commenting on “... the democratic Cornish—monarchy and aristocracy meant little to them, unlike the more conservative English”. And Rowse recollects his memories of a village earlier in the 1900s, where “I never heard anyone say Sir to anybody ... The bulk of our people lived in independent villages, like the china clay area, or Redruth and Camborne, they are all of them democratically inclined, everybody equal with everybody else”.⁷⁴ Apparently this independence had existed since the thirteenth century from a class of mobile, peasant-farmer-tinners.⁷⁵ It gave the people the ability to turn their hand to any available work, and to be able to negotiate at any level whether it was with an employer or at the markets.

⁷⁰ Ayton, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁷¹ Forbes, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

⁷² Mills, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

⁷⁵ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

Uppermost in the travellers' minds was the image of West Barbary, so they were seeking difference from the people elsewhere in England. Yet the difference revealed of an independent manner and lack of class consciousness was found through a spirit of industrialisation instead. So West Barbary needed to be appeased, and was symbolised in the Cornish looks! Fiennes was impressed by the country women. "I must say they are as comely sort of women as I have seen anywhere tho' in ordinary dress, good black eyes and crafty enough and very neat".⁷⁶ Warner was also struck by the "beauty and freshness of the Cornish fair ... a peculiar smoothness in the texture of their skin, its delicacy and healthy colour".⁷⁷ He went on to say, "both men and women, exhibit the finest specimens of Cornish strength and beauty ... the climate food, or employment of the people are highly conducive to the maturation and perfection of the human figure".⁷⁸ He was told it was due to the "oily nature of their common diet, which consists chiefly of pilchards".⁷⁹ Warner sums up the character of the men as "sturdy and bold, honest and sagacious", and the women as "lovely and modest, courteous and unaffected", and all were hospitable.⁸⁰ Redding also had something to say about the distinctive looks and features of the Cornish "so distinct from their fellow-countrymen ... large black eyes, dark hair, and swarthy complexion". Like Warner, he thought they were "of kind and agreeable manners". "The women are handsome ... modest, open and unaffected in manners, free of the constraint which is the mark of a want of good breeding. Redding thought that, "the men are strongly made, and more active than those of the midland counties of England".⁸¹ Redding and Warner both quoted a remark made about the Cornwall militia under Colonel Molesworth at Chatham, that "they stood on more ground than any other regiment of the same number". Redding ascribes their muscular power to hurling, wrestling and outdoor labour".⁸² To encapsulate the Cornish character through the eyes of the travellers, they were "highly intelligent, compassionate, hospitable, industrious, speculative and brave", which were the

⁷⁶ Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

⁷⁷ Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁸¹ Redding, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁸² *Ibid.*

common denominators of the emerging Cornish industrialised society, according to Deacon.⁸³

Collins also remarked upon the people's courtesy, already noted by Warner and Redding.

The manners of the Cornish of all ranks, down to the lowest are remarkably distinguished by courtesy—a courtesy of that kind which is quite independent of artificial breeding, and which proceeds solely from natural motives of kindness and from an innate anxiety to please.⁸⁴

Collins found the Cornish peasantry very helpful to strangers and eager to give assistance in directions. They had “ready hospitality, and great gratitude for small rewards of services rendered”. Even in the commercialised 1850s, Collins felt everyone stared at him, as it was unusual to see visitors walking with a backpack.⁸⁵ “There is a touch of alacrity about the peasantry in this neighbourhood. They have something to say to you in passing; if only ‘Good day, Sir’, a friendliness of tone is apparent”, commented White in 1854.⁸⁶

Payton speaks of a “Cornish sense of identity, often held quite unselfconsciously”.⁸⁷ The overwhelmingly homogenous and cohesive nature of the people was in part attributed to the fact that mass immigration by outsiders was not experienced in Cornwall as it was in other industrialised counties. Cornish folk were literally known as ‘Cousin Jacks and Jennies’.⁸⁸ Payton points out that non-Cornish people are considered foreigners, and that they “depict Cornwall as a land of difference”.⁸⁹ The travellers themselves recognised this phenomenon. Collins explains why the people's affability made such an impression on the visitors travelling through Cornwall.

Cornwall—a county where, it must be remembered, a stranger is doubly a stranger, in relation to provincial sympathies, where the national feeling is

⁸³ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁸⁴ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁸⁶ White, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

⁸⁷ Payton, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

almost entirely merged in the local feeling; where a man speaks of himself as Cornish in much the same spirit as a Welshman speaks of himself as Welsh.⁹⁰

White also acknowledged that “a strong spirit of distinct nationality is still cherished in Cornwall”.⁹¹ The people in Devon and Cornwall were quite diverse from one another in their character and accents. White, upon entering Cornwall from Devon in 1854 wrote, “at once you are struck with the difference between the county you are in and the one you have left”.⁹² This also could be partially explained by Cornwall’s strong links with its Celtic past when the roots of the settlements go back to pre-Saxon times, compared with Devon’s Anglo-Saxon heritage.

To conclude, the travellers detected significant differences in Cornish conduct and behaviour: a lack of deference, the motivated, inventive miner, the self-assured fisherman. These were all characteristics that Deacon believes were links between what he calls the imagery of “West Barbary” and “Industrial Civilisation”. The geography of mining supplied the dominant images of place in Cornwall, which overlaid Cornish traditional culture. Deacon says the “Cornish working class had become the shock troops of wage labour, paragons of industrialisation, ingenious, inventive, civil, well mannered and alert”.⁹³ Moreover, the effects of mining had suffused many aspects of Cornish society. Industrialisation formed a Cornish identity fuelled by confidence derived from their technological inventiveness and their independent nature, which created an exceptional people. Hence the travellers went to Cornwall expecting it to be like a foreign country, its people exhibiting unique character and customs. They anticipated at least a taint of West Barbary, and in some ways they were not disappointed, as the Cornish treated them with curiosity as they would foreigners, and displayed behaviour different by comparison to most of the other counties in England. In particular for the eighteenth century travellers the industrialised Cornish society was a vision of the future; they observed class mobility and a lack of deference, which had not as yet appeared in their own counties.

⁹⁰ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁹¹ White, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁹³ Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

However, it was during the second half of the nineteenth century that the Cornish confidence was to falter with the decline of the copper mines and the instability of the pilchard industry. The Cornish stubborn pride in their mining expertise, and their indomitable spirit, was partly responsible for the lack of diversification into other industrial activities, which may have helped their staggering economy at the time. With unemployment and mass migration, Cornish identity was again to reassert itself inheriting the underpinning imagery of West Barbary and the confidence of Industrial Civilisation.



The Land's End, Cornwall

Illustration by William Daniell in William Daniell, *A voyage Round Great Britain*, Vol. Viii, (London, 1978,) p.63.

CONCLUSION

Through the observations of a selection of contemporary travellers/writers of the eighteenth and mid nineteenth century, Cornwall's industrial process has been revealed to be different when compared to the rest of Britain. A number of factors have been identified to explain why Cornwall's economic and social development was distinctively different. Firstly, Cornwall was one of the earliest regions to experience industrialisation, the forerunner to what had become known as the Industrial Revolution. Secondly, this early industrial change determined economic and social marginality. Thirdly, the mining industry dominated Cornish society and fourthly, as a consequence, Cornwall's industry became overspecialised, limiting growth and expansion and eventuating in economic stagnation. Finally, due to Cornwall's isolation, the Cornish culture and identity continued to be unique and different.

The following points, detected in the traveller's writings, illustrated some evidence of Cornwall's unique industrial experience. One point was that manufacturing through a factory mode of production had not existed in Cornwall on a large scale at any time during industrialisation. Another was that Cornwall did not experience an 'Industrial Revolution' as such, having been industrialised in connection with the mining industry for centuries, but if a date is required for comparing to the rest of England, copper being mined on a commercial scale from the 1690s marked the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Cornwall. More specifically, Thomas Newcomen's invention of a steam-powered pump in 1712, solved the problem of pumping water from Cornwall's copper mines, consequently spearheading much of the changes in British mining to come, thus engineering motion, marking the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Britain. Another point was that Cornwall's 'Industrial Revolution' was not complete. After being technically the most advanced mining centre in the world, Cornwall's industry was to stagnate due to its overspecialised, 'imperfect' industrialisation caused by its inability to diversify into secondary industry. A further difference was that Cornwall had evolved a unique financial management method and a "ticketing" system, which involved risk sharing by both employers and workers, a system which was considered for emulation by

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other counties. Another point of difference was Cornish labourers traditionally practiced mixed occupations by moving between mining, agriculture and fishing depending on the seasonal availability of work. And the final point revealed was that Cornwall had a long history of a large number of workers occupied on a single site.

All of these points of difference during Cornwall's industrialisation, when compared to the Midlands and the northern counties, were revealed by dividing the travellers' observations into three themes entitled space, livings, and people. As space dominated the travellers' writings, two sub themes were identified revealing the travellers' observations on inland space and coastal space. On arrival into Cornwall the travellers carried with them preconceptions distorted by spatial myths represented by barren wastes, craggy shores, plundered shipwrecks and fishing villages harbouring smugglers' dens. However as they travelled through Cornwall their remarks showed that they began to distinguish between spatial myth and spatial reality. They found that the barren wasteland was interspersed with fertile valleys and beautiful scenery, and that 'West Barbary' symbolized by shipwrecks and smuggling was replaced by an Industrial Civilisation.

The mining landscape dominated inland space for the travellers even though agriculture covered a greater percentage of land. Comparing the earlier and later travellers' observations gauged the overall growth and expansion of the copper mines and improvements in technology. The copper mining region was seen to expand eastwards, whilst tin mining, prolific in the early eighteenth century, became less important in the early nineteenth century. Although mining had always been a significant element in shaping Cornwall's inland space, it was given a boost in the early seventeen hundreds with the advent of the steam engine, which caused new engine houses and ore stamping machines to spring up across the countryside, leaving traditional methods behind. The travellers' obsession with mining was confirmation of Cornwall's own 'Industrial Revolution' operating independently from the rest of Britain, isolated from its influence. The mining industry was seen to suffer a number of setbacks, the markets being affected by the European wars, problems with overproduction, a depression period in the 1840s, and although

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production peaked in the late 1850s, it eventually stagnated and collapsed due to overseas competition, plummeting ore prices and the cost of running the mines. However the major cause of Cornwall's problems was, as the travellers' reports witnessed, little diversification into other industrial fields or manufacturing, resulting in its industrial space being overspecialised in mining.

The travellers' comments on improvements in agricultural space were mostly confined to the improvement made to the wastelands in west Cornwall, which had been assigned by the landowners to the miners who were encouraged to build cottages and enclose a few acres of these lands.

Evidence of the growth and prosperity of the mining towns was detected in the travellers' writings, however when compared to the urbanisation experienced in the industrial north their growth was miniscule. The major agricultural towns played second fiddle to the mining towns, but survived despite Cornwall's economic problems. The travellers' observations indicated initially a prosperous landscape that did not greatly develop or diversify after the eighteenth century, which concealed Cornwall's eventual economic downfall.

The travellers have also revealed Cornwall's general lack of diversification in coastal space being taken up with fishing villages and trading ports. Some ports developed the dual purposes of fishing and importing coal and wood and exporting ore for the mining industry. The travellers' observations had shown that coastal space had not changed dramatically if compared to coastal space in the northern industrial regions. This overspecialisation in mining and pilchard fishing resulted in some villages and ports declining in the later part of the nineteenth century. However many were beginning to change to cater for the tourist and health visitors, ensuring a place in Cornwall's economy for the future.

On the theme of livings, the miners once again dominated the travellers' comments on the ways people earned their livelihoods. They characterized Cornwall's early industrialisation with their technical expertise and innovative risk sharing. The travellers found that many of the livings in Cornwall indirectly depended on mining

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for their livelihood; from the landowners who owned the mines and also benefited by having their wastelands cleared by the miners, and the ship owners and merchants in the ports relying on the mining trade, to the pilchard fishermen who worked in the industry between seasons. Cornwall traditionally displayed a lack of class-consciousness and therefore social mobility was also a feature of Cornwall's livings.

The uncertainty of employment was a feature of the fishing industry due to the seasonal run of the pilchards that appeared for only a few weeks a year. Therefore a characteristic of employment in Cornwall was the mobility of the workers between fishing, mining and agricultural labouring. The Cornish economy's reliance on pilchards became a problem when the behavioural patterns of the shoals became unreliable early in the nineteenth century. Fishing was to suffer the same fate as copper mining at almost the same time, due to overspecialisation in seining, being replaced by the drift netting and eventually the superior technology of stream trawling.

Women's labour was also found to be important at the mines, in small-scale farming, and was indispensable in the seasonal pilchard industry. However the role of women in Cornwall has often been overlooked. Although the travellers' found women labouring in surface jobs around the mines in the mid 1700s, they also often undertook the main responsibility of cultivating allotments thereby providing valuable support to their husbands who were often working down the mines. Women were also found to be the mainstay of shore-based operations in the pilchard fishing industry. The living and working conditions of the men, women and children in the mining and fishing industries were considered by many of the travellers to be superior to their counterparts in the northern counties.

Cornwall's "imperfect and incomplete" industrialisation with its over-specialised industrial base, resulted in an over-specialised workforce which led to the stagnation and economic decline of the county due to the dependence on mining, many miners eventually emigrating to mining areas in the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and elsewhere. Similarly, over-specialisation of the seine fisherman in their skills, and like the miners, their inability to diversify, also resulted in their redundancy

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when the pilchards stopped running. This was despite the miners and the fisherman being able to hold dual occupations.

Travellers went to Cornwall in expectation of West Barbary and came away with praise for Industrial Civilisation as portrayed by the Cornish people, the third theme investigated here. This revelation was even more impressive to them due to Cornwall's advanced industrialisation exhibiting early evidence of a complex industrial society. The new phenomenon of worldwide economic importance and a place in the forefront of industrialization removed Cornwall from the image of West Barbary into an Industrial Civilisation. In moving from West Barbary into a homogenous industrial community over a relatively short period of time, the Cornish retained their individuality, peripherality and difference as witnessed by the travellers. Therefore industrialisation led to a new assertive 'Cornishness' which perpetuated Cornwall's distinct sense of identity. The Cornish therefore presented to the travellers a people quite different to the rest of Britain, not in the manner they had expected with smugglers and barbarians, but with a unique disposition and view on their own world and way of life, represented in their lack of deference, their motivation, inventiveness and self-assurance. Methodism was also an important influence on the people during the transition from West Barbary to Industrial Civilisation, although the travellers seldom commented on this.

The effects of mining suffused many aspects of Cornish society. The geography of mining supplied the dominant images of place in Cornwall, which overlaid Cornish traditional culture. The Cornish working class had become paragons of industrialisation, ingenious, inventive, civil, well mannered and alert. Moreover, industrialisation formed a Cornish identity fuelled by confidence derived from their technological inventiveness and their independent nature, which created an exceptional people. Hence the travellers went to Cornwall expecting it to be like a foreign country, and in some ways they were not disappointed, as the Cornish treated them with curiosity as they would foreigners.

All the travellers' observations point toward a unique industrial culture that developed in Cornwall, an example of the diversity within Britain in the era of

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industrialisation. Cornwall's pre-eminence in technological innovation facilitated rapid industrial developments that expanded throughout the county, carried out by an innovative and determined people, who reflected the traditional independence of earlier centuries but also embraced the new culture of a distinctive industrialised society. However this industrial prowess disguised the underlying characteristics of industrialisation in Cornwall, that is, its reliance on importing coal and timber needed for mining operations, and exporting minerals and crude copper ore through a number of ports and harbours. Geographical isolation, delay in being connected to the national railway system, and distance from the centres of economic political power, contributed toward a specialised industrial process. A number of other factors served to frustrate investment or diversification attempts in Cornwall. They included the Cornish character of 'indomitable perseverance' and 'stubborn pride' which was partly responsible for a preoccupation in mining affairs and a reluctance to diversify into new industries, a hostility toward outside concerns which frustrated investors, and a stubborn determination to sustain ailing mines in the hope of striking better lodes. These issues ensured that the process of Cornwall's industrialisation would be imperfect, incomplete and over-specialised.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON TRAVELLERS IN CORNWALL

Celia Fiennes was born in 1662. Her father, Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, was the second son of William 8th Baron and 1st viscount Saye and Sele. Celia Fiennes was considered a non-conformist, taking delight in scrupulously recording the number of "Descenders" meetings she found. She moved easily between social spheres, and appeared sympathetic to the new industrial society appearing in places such as Cornwall. Her interest in mining, in drainage projects and manufacturing processes was obvious from her detailed writings. She travelled alone by horseback, apart from her servants, on her "Great Journey" in 1698, and consequently, as a detached and independent witness of impending change, her observations were invaluable.¹

Fiennes' contemporary, **Daniel Defoe**, was born in London in 1660, and was educated at Morton's dissenting academy at Stoke Newington. In 1683 he embarked on an ambitious mercantile career, and was often bankrupt in later years in various business projects. In 1685 he fought in the army of the Duke of Monmouth. His non-conformist beliefs saw him arrested on numerous occasions and he spent some time in prison. His writings were profuse, and many publications are well known such as *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Moll Flanders*. His *Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, published in 1724, has appealed to readers for centuries, and is a compilation of several trips Defoe made around Britain. It has been useful for its explicit reports on commercial life and his "crafty" borrowings from published sources for statistical information.²

Dr Richard Pococke was born in Southampton in 1704. He was educated by his grandfather at his school at Highclere rectory in Hampshire. He graduated from Oxford in 1733, and then made tours to France, Italy, Alexandria, and Upper Egypt exploring the Nile. He continued his explorations of the Middle East and Asia minor and Europe, becoming known as the "pioneer of Alpine travel", following up with publications on his adventures.³ In 1756 he was appointed to the bishopric of

¹ Christopher Morris, *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685 – 1712*, (London, 1982,) introduction, pp. 10-31.

² Daniel Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain*, (Harmondsworth, 1971), Pat Rogers introduction, pp. 9-33.

³ *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. xvi, (Oxford, 1938), pp. 12-14.

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Ossory, and settled in to the palace of Kilkenny. In 1763 Pococke established an institution in Kilkenny for the instruction of foundling boys in the art of weaving. He was described as “of mild manners, and primitive simplicity” and as a host was considered as “dull”.⁴ His tours around England on horseback used here were an impersonal record simply written and factual in detail.

William Gilpin was a writer born at Scaleby Castle near Carlisle in 1724. He was ordained in 1746 and became the vicar of Boldre in the New Forest. During his long summer vacations Gilpin undertook sketching tours and started writing his picturesque series of works, which he classified as ‘a new class of travels’. He entitled the series *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty*. The style of the writings had been characterised as “too poetic, but full of ingenious reflections, and free from exaggeration, truthful and warm.”⁵ A 1973 reprint of Gilpin’s writings on his tour through the Southwest of England, first published in 1798 entitled *Observations on the Western Parts of England*, was analysed in this dissertation. He travelled by horseback in 1778* only as far as Bodmin in Cornwall, and then returned via the south coast of Devon back to London. Gilpin’s perspective was of things of picturesque beauty, which he considered of the natural kind “neither grounds laid out by art, nor improved by agriculture, are of this kind”.⁶ His account was therefore useful in analysing space and any associated sign of change.

John Tripe was born at Ashburton in Devon in 1752, and changed his name to **John Swete** upon a promise to his godfather’s widow Mrs Swete after he was left her fortune. He had inherited the property Oxtou House and estate near Exeter from his mother’s family, which he spent much of his life on improvements. He graduated from Oxford with an MA in 1777 and took his Holy Orders in 1781 and became a Prebendary of Exeter Cathedral. Swete’s first ‘topographical’ tour was made to Cornwall in 1780, from which followed extensive tours of Devon. For his Cornish

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. VII, (Oxford, 1938), pp 1262-1263.

* Although Gilpin’s book was first published 20 years after his tour, he revised and amended it.

⁶ William Gilpin, *Observations on the western parts of England*, (Richmond, 1973), p. 2.

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tour he went well prepared with works of Borlase and Pryce, and reported honestly on what he had observed.⁷

James Boswell was the Laird of Auchinleck, Ayrshire in Scotland.⁸ A complex character, Boswell is described by Daiches as an odd combination of “vanity, extreme self-consciousness, sexual promiscuity, drinking habits, proneness to hero worship and extraordinary narcissism”.⁹ Daiches also accused him of having shallow opinions, little literary taste and someone who was prone to rationalise all moral questions so as to justify his actions. However Daiches recognised his artistic ability in describing and recording scenes.¹⁰ Boswell recorded his feelings and activities daily, from a ‘gentleman’s’ perspective. This dissertation utilised one of his unpublished writings when he travelled by road from London to Land’s End in 1792 by post chaise and horseback, spending the bulk of his time in Cornwall. He tended to write of his visits to stately homes, about the gentry and their lifestyles, and of his own importance! Because of his upper class perspective he made relatively few comments on the “lower orders”.

James Forbes was born in 1749 in London. In 1765 he was appointed writer to the East India Company stationed in Bombay. When he left India in 1784 he took with him one hundred and fifty volumes filled with sketches and notes on all aspects of the sub continent, including fauna, flora, culture and customs. He later condensed his writings, entitled *Oriental Memoirs*, for publication. He travelled extensively in Europe, becoming captive in France during the Napoleonic wars. He returned to England in 1804, then after Waterloo returned to France, eventually dying in Europe in 1819.¹¹ Observations on Forbes’ travels with his family in Cornwall in 1794, were related in correspondence to his sister-in-law, and reproduced in the *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall* 1983.

⁷ Rev. John Swete, ‘A Tour in Cornwall in 1780’, *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall* 6, 3 (1971), Biographical note by rosemary Leach, p. 185-186.

⁸ M. Hardwick, *A literary atlas and gazetteer of the British Isles*, (Detroit, 1973), p. 130.

⁹ D. Daiches, *A critical history of English literature, Vol II The Restoration to the present day*, (London, 1994), p. 795.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. vii, (Oxford, 1938), p. 397.

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Although **Richard Warner** was born in London in 1763, he grew up in Lymington in Hampshire, attending the grammar school in nearby Christchurch. His greatest disappointment was not being nominated on the foundation for Winchester College, from which he dreamed of a fellowship at New College with an ordination in the English church. He attended Oxford for eight terms but left without a degree. He was ordained in 1790 and served for four years with William Gilpin at Boldre, near Lymington. The influence of Gilpin's tastes was afterwards perceptible in Warner's topographical writings, such as his original publication used in this dissertation, *A Tour through Cornwall in the Autumn of 1808*. Warner later served in curacies in Southampton, Bath, Wiltshire and Somerset. In Bath he was considered to be the best known man of letters in that city, and knew many literary figures; his volumes of *Literary Recollections* were full of anecdotes. His own writings were numerous and his sermons were 'models of pulpit eloquence.' He was also considered "a man of independent thought and character" with strong views on catholic emancipation, and was a rigorous whig.¹² Warner's tour followed the coastal road along Cornwall's southern shore and returned along the northern coast.

A Voyage round Great Britain was undertaken in 1813 by **Richard Ayton** and **William Daniell**, and completed in 1823 by Daniell alone. Ayton was 27 and Daniell considerably older at 44 when they commenced their journey together. Ayton had no established career whereas Daniell aspired to full election in the Royal Academy. Ayton's concern with the customs and beliefs, and social conditions of the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which he travelled were enthusiastically related. His outrage at the living and working conditions of many labourers were "far in advance of its time" and were helpful when making comparisons between Cornwall and the rest of Britain.¹³ Daniell's writings were concerned principally with description and were "pedestrian" in style and fairly commonplace by comparison, but managed to capture a 'sense of place', as he continued the journey down the east coast of England alone.¹⁴

¹² *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. xx, (Oxford, 1938), pp. 856-857.

¹³ Richard Ayton & William Daniell, *A voyage round Great Britain undertaken in the summer of 1813*, (London, 1978), foreword pp. v-viii.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Cyrus Redding was the only traveller who could have been considered a 'local', having been born in Penryn in 1785. He was the son of a Baptist minister and was educated mainly at home by his father. In 1806 he settled in London to a life of continuous industry as a journalist. His works were prolific taking him to Plymouth, France, and Bath. The original edition of *An Illustrated Itinerary of the County of Cornwall*, printed in 1842, was used in this dissertation. It was written as an illustrated county history, part of a planned pilot series, which he did not manage to continue past volume two.¹⁵ The book was very useful as a detailed coverage of Cornish history, customs and culture, with a sympathetic slant on many aspects, as Redding journeyed by road throughout the county in 1842.

In 1850, the Victorian novelist **Wilkie Collins**, was inspired to write *Rambles Beyond Railways* after what he considered to be an adventurous walking tour of Cornwall in 1850 while on holiday. The 1982 edition of this book, originally published in 1851, was used to analyse industrial Cornwall. He was born in Tavistock Square in London in 1824 to a wealthy family. He entered the legal profession and was called to the Bar in 1857. His most famous novels were *Women in White* written in 1860, and *The Moonstone* written in 1868. He was concerned with the abuse of Victorian women and supported the introduction of the 'Married Women's Property Act'.¹⁶ Collins was therefore particularly interested in women and children and the work that he found them doing. At the age of 26 he walked around Cornwall with a backpack, from Looe on the south coast to Land's End, and back to Tintagel on the north coast calling into several ports on the way. Because he was interested in an *adventure*, he visited scenes of Cornish legends on the Northern coast, climbed down a deep copper mine shaft which had been excavated under the sea, and visited fishing villages and druid relics. He also wrote in detail on the Cornish people, his preconceptions and his findings.

Walter White was a travel writer whose extensive annual walking holiday in 1854, took him along the southern coastal paths to Land's End and then returned north to

¹⁵ *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. xvi, (Oxford, 1938), pp.813-814.

¹⁶ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles beyond railways*, (London, 1982), p.1.

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Bristol. At 43 he was somewhat older than Collins was on his walking tour, and therefore would have been more aware of the differences between the industrial north and the south-west, having lived through more transformations in the landscape and society. As a young man he learnt and practised his father's trade in upholstering and cabinet making, also trying his luck in America without improving his circumstances. This was the reason why often on his journey he tried to talk the Cornish people out of emigrating. In a discussion with a shoemaker near Looe in Cornwall, White related that "He [the shoemaker] felt inclined at times to emigrate; and would if he only be sure of being better off; a question on which I gave him satisfactory reasons for staying at home."¹⁷

White became involved with the Royal Society eventually becoming the librarian in 1861.¹⁸ White's time with the Royal Society was when he began his serious literary work. It was at this time also that he began the holiday walks, which furnished the material for all his best known books.¹⁹ The book used in this dissertation is the original copy, published in 1865, entitled *A Londoner's Walk to the Land's End*. Walter White has been selected because of his descriptive, detailed writing where he noted everything fastidiously. Therefore his comments were a valuable source for the purpose of detecting difference in all three chosen themes. He wrote for the benefit of anyone else wishing to follow his holiday route. White introduced his book by saying "I am tempted to write about what I saw, in the hope that you also, hopeful reader, may share the enjoyment".²⁰

Thomas H Mills' original work published in 1863 entitled *A Week's Wanderings in Cornwall and Devon* was also referred to. As an explanation for the reason this was written, it is probably appropriate to use Mills' own words.

The following series of papers are offered to the public as a memento of a rambling excursion, [sic] in the hope that they may afford to the reader some part of the pleasure the Author experienced, both during this brief holiday, and in subsequently recording his experiences. They lay no claim to the dignity of a guidebook; they abound not in statistics, or other useful, but

¹⁷ Walter White, *A Londoner's walk to the Land's End*, (London, 1865), p. 171.

¹⁸ Hardwick, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁹ *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. xxi, (Oxford, 1938), pp. 83-84.

²⁰ White, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

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rather dry information; but are simply what they are styled, the "Week's Wanderings" of.²¹

Mills' excursion was a summer holiday of swimming, drinking and sightseeing with a friend. They used various means of transport, arriving in the small port of Hayle in Cornwall by paddlesteamer from Bristol. Thereafter they travelled by train, coach and boat from Land's End to Teignmouth on the southeast coast of Devon. His writing is full of light-hearted, interesting and descriptive observations, which he often compared to the way of life in Bristol. His comparisons were useful for detecting change, or lack of it.

²¹ Thomas H. Mills, *A week's wanderings in Cornwall and Devon*, (London, 1863), p. 3.

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